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The Dangers of Expansive Realism

Owen Harries

. . . it is sometimes necessary to repeat what all know. All mapmakers should place the Mississippi in the same location and avoid originality. It may be boring, but one has to know where it is. We cannot have the Mississippi flowing toward the Rockies, just for a change.

—Saul Bellow, *Mr. Sammler's Planet*

IN MANY ways NATO is a boring organization. It is a thing of acronyms, jargon, organizational charts, arcane strategic doctrines, and tired rhetoric. But there is no gainsaying that it has a Mississippi-like centrality and importance in American foreign policy. When, then, proposals are made to change it radically—to give it new (and very different) members, new purposes, new ways of conducting business, new non-totalitarian enemies (or, conversely, to dispense altogether with the concept of enemies as a rationale)—it is sensible to pay close attention and to scrutinize carefully and repeatedly the arguments that bolster those proposals. Even at the risk of making NATO boring in new ways, it is important to get things right.

Before getting down to particular arguments, the proposed expansion of NATO into Central and Eastern Europe should be placed in the wider context that made it an issue. For nearly half a century the United States and its allies fought the Cold War, not, it was always insisted, against Russia and the Russian people, but against the Soviet regime and the ideology it represented. An implicit Western objective in the Cold War was the conversion of Russia from totalitarianism to a more or less normal state, and, if possible, to democracy.

Between 1989 and 1991, a political miracle occurred. The Soviet regime, steeped in blood and obsessed with total control as it had been throughout most of its history, voluntarily gave up its Warsaw Pact empire, collapsed the Soviet system upon itself, and then acquiesced in its own demise—all with virtually no violence. This extraordinary sequence of events was by no means inevitable. Had it so chosen, the regime could have resisted the forces of change as it had on previous occasions, thus either extending its life, perhaps for decades more, or going down in a welter of blood and destruction. That, indeed, would have been more normal behavior, for as the English scholar Martin Wight once observed, "Great power status is lost, as it is won, by violence. A Great Power does not die in its bed." What occurred in the case of the Soviet Union was very much the exception.

A necessary condition for its being so was an understanding—explicit according to some, but in any case certainly implicit—that the West would not take strategic and political advantage of what the Soviet Union was allowing to happen to its empire and to itself. Whatever is said now, such a bargain was

Owen Harries is editor of *The National Interest*. An extended version of this article will appear in a volume on NATO expansion to be published by the Cato Institute.

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assumed by both sides, for it was evident to all involved that in its absence—if, that is, it had become apparent that the West was intent on exploiting any retreat by Moscow—events would not be allowed to proceed along the liberalizing course that they actually took. Further, there seemed to be no basis for the United States objecting to such a bargain. For, after all, its avowed objective was not the eastward extension of its own power and influence in Europe, but the restoration of the independence of the countries of the region. In effect, the bargain gave the United States everything it wanted (more, in fact, for the breakup of the Soviet Union had never been a Cold War objective), and in return required it only to refrain from doing what it had never expressed any intention of doing.

Now, and very much at the initiative of the United States, the West is in the process of reneging on that implicit bargain by extending NATO into countries recently vacated by Moscow. It is an ominous step. Whatever is said, however ingenious and vigorous the attempts to obscure the facts or change the subject, NATO is a military alliance, the most powerful in the history of the world, and the United States is the dominant force in that alliance. And whatever is claimed about spreading democracy, making Europe "whole", promoting stability, peacekeeping, and righting past injustices—all formulations that serve, either consciously or inadvertently, to divert attention from the political and strategic reality of what is now occurring—cannot succeed in obscuring the truth that the eastward extension of NATO will represent an unprecedented projection of American power into a sensitive region hitherto beyond its reach. It will constitute a veritable geopolitical revolution. It is not necessary to accept in its entirety the resonant but overwrought dictum of Sir Halford Mackinder ("Who rules East Europe commands the Heartland; Who rules the Heartland commands the World Island; Who rules the World Island commands the World") to recognize the profound strategic implications of what the U.S. Senate is being asked to endorse.[1]

Why is the Clinton administration acting in this way? And—a different question—does it serve American interests that it is doing so, and that its expressed intention is to proceed much further along the same path?

Immediately after the end of the Cold War there was no great enthusiasm either in America or Western Europe for enlarging NATO. In the early days of the Clinton administration, Secretary of State Warren Christopher, Secretary of Defense Les Aspin, and Ambassador-at-Large Strobe Talbott were all opposed to it.

How, then, did it come about that by the beginning of 1994 President Clinton was declaring that "the question is no longer whether NATO will take on new members, but when and how"? It was certainly not by a process of ratiocination, vigorous debate, and the creation of an intellectual consensus concerning interests, purposes, and means. To this day there is no such consensus, and no coherent case for NATO expansion on which all of its principal supporters agree.

How Enlargement Happened

THE CLINTON administration's conversion from indifference, or even skepticism, to insistence on NATO expansion was the result of a combination of disparate events and pressures:

• The strength of the Polish-American vote, as well as that of other Americans of Central and East European origin.

• The enormous vested interests—careers, contracts, consultancies, accumulated expertise—represented by the NATO establishment,

[1]When I wrote this, I thought that I was drawing attention to something that was implicit but unacknowledged in the policy of NATO expansion. But in his latest book, Zbigniew Brzezinski directly and honestly links American primacy to "preponderance on the Eurasian continent." In the same chapter he quotes Mackinder's dictum. See *The Grand Chessboard* (New York: Basic Books, 1997), chapter 2.

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which now needed a new reason and purpose to justify the organization's continued existence.

• The "moral" pressure exerted by East European leaders, for whom NATO membership is principally important as a symbol that they are fully European, and as a means of back door entry into the European Union.

• Conversely, the growing eagerness of some West European governments to grant these states membership of NATO as an acceptable price for keeping them out of, or at least delaying their entry into, the European Union.

• The concern and self-distrust felt by some Germans, and not least by Chancellor Helmut Kohl, at the prospect of their country's being left on the eastern frontier of NATO, adjacent to an area of political weakness and potential instability.

• Growing doubts about democracy's prospect of success in Russia, and fear of the reemergence of an assertive nationalism there.

• The need of some American conservative intellectuals for a bold foreign policy stroke to "remoralize" their own ranks after some dispiriting domestic defeats, the enthusiasm of others for "a democratic crusade" in Central and Eastern Europe, and the difficulty of yet others to break a lifetime's habit of regarding Moscow as the enemy.

Formidable as this combination of pressures was, it is doubtful that it would have been capable of converting the Clinton administration on NATO expansion were it not for the addition of one other crucial factor: Bosnia. The war in Bosnia focused American attention on post-Cold War Central Europe, and it did so in a most emotional way. Bosnia also raised in acute form the question of the future of NATO, as the alliance's feeble response to the crisis cast doubt on its continued viability, and it raised the question specifically in the context of instability in Central and Eastern Europe. The domino theory, forgotten for two decades, was quickly resurrected and applied. "Bosnia" was increasingly understood not as referring to a discrete event but as a metaphor for the chronic, historically ordained instability of a whole region.

Russia is Russia is Russia

TAKEN TOGETHER, these pressures were politically formidable, especially for an administration as sensitive to pressure as was Clinton's. But they had very little to do with America's national interests, and the administration's subsequent attempts to make a case for NATO's eastward expansion in terms of those interests have been perfunctory and shallow. A much more serious attempt has been made outside the administration, mainly by commentators of a realist persuasion. The case they have made, however, is badly flawed.

The realist case is based largely on the conviction that Russia is inherently and incorrigibly expansionist, regardless of how and by whom it is governed. Henry Kissinger has warned of "the fateful rhythm of Russian history." Zbigniew Brzezinski emphasizes the centrality in Russia's history of "the imperial impulse" and claims that in post-communist Russia that impulse "remains strong and even appears to be strengthening." Thus Brzezinski sees an "unfortunate continuity" between the Soviet era and today in defining national interests and formulating foreign policy. Another realist, Peter Rodman, speaks in the same vein, explaining the "lengthening shadow of Russian strength" by asserting that "Russia is a force of nature."

In arguing in this way, these commentators are being very true to their realist position. But they are also drawing attention to what is one of the most serious intellectual weaknesses of that position—namely, that in its stress on the structure of the international system and on how states are placed within that system, realism attaches little or no importance to what is going on *inside* particular states: what kind of regimes are in power, what kind of ideologies prevail, what kind of leadership is provided. For these realists, Russia is Russia is Russia, regardless of whether it is under czarist, communist, or nascent democratic rule.

That approach is enormously counterintuitive, and its weaknesses have been particularly evident in this most ideological of cen-

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turies. Has it really made no significant difference to Russian foreign policy whether it is in the hands of a Stolypin, a Stalin, or a Yeltsin? Or to German policy whether Stresemann, Hitler, or Adenauer was in power in that country? In foreign policy terms, was it pointless to have exerted great effort to bring down the Nazi and Soviet regimes?

For most people, merely to ask these questions would seem to answer them. But not so long ago such prominent realists as E.H. Carr and A.J.P. Taylor were prepared to argue an essential foreign policy continuity between the Weimar Republic and Nazi Germany. Indeed, and more seriously, it was the assumption of such a continuity—that Hitler was an ordinary compromising politician in the same mold as the Germans of the 1920s—that led Chamberlain fatally astray with his policy of appeasement. Already in this century, then, Western statesmen created a terrible crisis and allowed an unnecessary world war to happen because they falsely assumed that the foreign policy of a totalitarian regime would be no different from that of the struggling democracy it replaced. It would be inexcusable—and, almost certainly, again disastrous—if at the end of the century we made the same error in reverse, this time by proceeding on the assumption that the behavior of another struggling democracy will be no different from that of the totalitarian regime that preceded it.

Spheres of Influence

IF IN THIS ONE respect those who make the case for NATO expansion err in overemphasizing what is weakest in the realist position, in other respects their mistake has been to forget some of the precepts that are its strength. If realism is about anything, it is about a conscientious effort to try to see things as they really are. One of the ways things are in international politics is that great powers have spheres of influence. It is one of their basic characteristics, one of the features that qualifies them as "great", that their power radiates out to immediately adjacent regions in the form of significant influence, and that they take a particular interest in those regions. This is as characteristic of democratic great powers as it is of autocratic or totalitarian ones: one of the first important foreign policy acts of the United States, engaged in even before it was an authentic great power, was to claim for itself a huge sphere of influence with the Monroe Doctrine.

To embark on a policy whose deliberate aim is to deny Russian influence in Central and Eastern Europe, to corset Russia within its own boundaries, is therefore a policy fraught with danger. It retains what meager plausibility it has for two reasons: first, because of revulsion at the fact that in the communist period the Soviet Union ruthlessly and crudely translated the traditional concept of sphere of influence into a totalitarian one of a sphere of dominance, involving puppet regimes, occupying armies, terror, economic exploitation, and ideological regimentation; and second, because for the time being Russia is exceptionally weak. But as Russia recovers, and even if it becomes a functioning democracy, NATO expansion will become a risk-laden, destabilizing policy—not because extreme Russian nationalists or neocommunists are bound to come to the fore, but because, in the nature of things, Russia will again assert its normal prerogatives as a great power.

Indeed, if some of the arguments now being advanced forcefully were to prevail, the global picture that would result could be even worse. For at the same time as the United States appears determined to commit itself to denying Russia a sphere of influence, many powerful voices are insisting that it should do the same with respect to China. That country too should be strictly contained within its borders, and any attempt by it to extend its influence beyond them should be seen as illegitimate. Meanwhile, as these two huge countries would be so constrained, the United States itself, armed in virtue, should feel free to treat the entire globe as *its* sphere of influence, extending its presence and imposing its will as it sees fit. Far from promoting stability, such a policy would create new and dangerous tensions in world affairs.

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Ends and Means

ANOTHER OF THE central tenets of realism is that if the end is willed, so should be the means. The two should be kept in balance, preferably, as Walter Lippmann urged, "with a comfortable surplus of power in reserve." In the case of NATO expansion, this tenet is being ignored. The NATO members are moving to assume very large additional commitments at a time when they have all made substantial cuts to their defense budgets, and when more such cuts are virtually certain. (The French Cabinet, for example, announced in August that the military draft, which dates back two centuries, is to be phased out and that defense procurement expenditure is to be cut by 11 percent.) The irresponsibility of such a course of action raises the question of the seriousness of the new commitments being undertaken. After all, such pledges have been made in the past, only to be broken: Munich, 1938, was the last occasion on which Western powers guaranteed the security of what is today the Czech Republic.

It is not only in terms of power that realists should be concerned with the balancing of ends and means. They should also consider the suitability of the instruments involved—particularly the human instruments—for the tasks at hand. Not to do so is likely to result in the sort of unpleasant surprise that some realist supporters of NATO expansion got as a result of the March 1997 Helsinki summit. At that meeting, so many concessions were made to Moscow by the Clinton administration that we now have an almost lunatic state of affairs: in order to make acceptable the expanding of NATO to contain a potentially dangerous Russia, we are coming close to making Russia an honorary member of NATO, with something approximating veto power.

Some of the initially most ardent supporters of expansion are now deeply dismayed by these developments. But surely the likelihood of such an outcome was foreseeable. After all, they knew from the start that the policy they were pushing would be negotiated not by a Talleyrand or a Metternich—or an Acheson or a Kissinger—but by Bill Clinton, the man who feels everyone's pain. Kissinger has been clear-eyed enough to label what happened at Helsinki a fiasco.

This image of a Europe "made whole" again after the division of the Cold War is one that the advocates of NATO expansion appeal to frequently. But it is not a convincing appeal. For one thing, coming from some mouths it tends to bring to mind Bismarck's comment: "I have always found the word Europe on the lips of those politicians who wanted something from other Powers which they dared not demand in their own name." For another, it invites the question of when exactly was the last time that Europe was "whole." In the 1930s, when the dictators were on the rampage? In the 1920s, when Germany and Russia were virtual non-actors? In 1910, when Europe was an armed camp and a furious arms race was in progress? In the 1860s, when Prussia was creating an empire with "blood and iron"? When exactly? And then there is the simple and undeniable fact that at every step of the way—and regardless of how many tranches of new members are taken in—the line dividing Europe will not be eliminated but simply moved to a different place. Only if Russia itself were to be included would Europe be "whole." Anyone who doubts this should consult an atlas.

One final note: During the last few months advocates of expansion have been resorting more and more to an argument of last resort—one of process, not of substance. It is that the United States is now so far committed that it is too late to turn back. That argument is not without some merit, for prestige does count, and undoubtedly prestige would be lost by a reversal at this stage. But that granted, prestige is not everything. When the alternative is to persist in serious error it may be necessary to sacrifice some prestige early, rather than much more later. To proceed resolutely down a wrong road—especially one that has a slippery slope—is not statesmanship. After all, the last time the argument that it is too late to turn back prevailed was exactly thirty years ago, as, without clear purpose, we were advancing deeper and deeper into Vietnam. □

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In Our Own Image

The Sources of American Conduct in World Affairs

David C. Hendrickson

IN THE LONG SPAN of American history, two moments stand out for their creative refashioning of the political order. The first comprises the framing, ratification, and amendment of the Federal Constitution from 1787 to 1790; the second, the creation of the system linking the United States with the advanced industrial democracies after the Second World War. The first incarnation of the American system lasted from 1789 until 1861, when its tensions exploded in a great war that brought it to an end. The second incarnation still endures; indeed, we are now commemorating the fiftieth anniversary of the institutions and programs—Bretton Woods, the Marshall Plan, and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization—most closely identified with it.

It may seem odd to consider these two political associations together, for there are crucial differences between them—in the character of their institutions, in the political loyalties held by the men and women within them, and in the equality (or inequality) of their members. But there are also remarkable affinities. Both creations aimed to establish something called "ordered liberty", substituting the rule of law for the "empire of force." Designed to find a *via media* between the anarchy of states and a consolidated empire (the two great poles along the spectrum of possibilities), both creations nevertheless sought to safeguard the two values with which each of these otherwise negative examples were closely identified: the liberty of states and the preservation of peace and order over an extended territory. This entailed the creation of a union or federative system of large extent that could preserve peace within its zone and ensure protection from aggression without. The golden grail of this search was an association that could combine the external force and order of a great empire with the internal freedoms of a small republic.

We are accustomed to thinking of the United States as a single political unit, and referring to it in the singular; before the Civil War, however, the United States were styled in the plural. This new order of the ages was far less centralized than historical imagination now allows. Provided with a general government by the Constitution, an institutional innovation which distinguished the United States from all previous federacies in world history, it nevertheless retained the purposes associated with the classic confederation. The powers delegated to the general government, as James Madison explained in Federalist No. 45, were "few and defined" and would be exercised "principally on external objects, as war, peace, negotiation, and foreign commerce." With standing military forces of very small size, military power was concentrated in the militia of the states and hence was radically decentralized. With no common currency (something that the framers did not antici-

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pate but which nevertheless occurred), the monetary affairs of the Union were often in a condition of anarchy. Until a fairly late period in its development, inter-sectional trade was very slight. "Now", as Henry Clay observed in 1820, "our connection is merely political. . . . There is scarcely any of that beneficial intercourse, the best basis of political connection, which consists in the exchange of the produce of our labor."

The "Union of different republics" was described in a bewildering variety of ways. It could be denounced as "a league with death and a covenant with hell" and as "a most unequal alliance by which the south has always been the loser and the north always the gainer." More typically it was praised as "the last bulwark of our hope" that stood frailly before surging tides of "disunion, anarchy, and civil war." It was, as Madison insisted, a thing *sui generis*, "so unexampled in its origin, so complex in its structure, and so peculiar in some of its features, that in describing it the political vocabulary does not furnish terms sufficiently distinctive and appropriate, without a detailed resort to the facts of the case."

A similar observation may be made of the post-World War II American system. It, too, acquired many names—"the American empire", "the Free World", "the West", an "empire by invitation." At the core of the post-World War II American system were NATO and the economic institutions associated with the Bretton Woods regime. The fifty-odd states that were ultimately brought into its bilateral and multilateral security communities included colonial powers and colonies, allies and enemies from the Second World War, democracies and dictatorships. Over time, however, democratic norms and liberal values took firm root within this second American system. This led observers to grope again for a name that would capture its peculiar character and specify its membership and boundaries. Plausible candidates for the most apt description have included "the pacific union of liberal democracies", the "zone of peace, wealth, and democracy", a "civic union" embracing the United States, Western Europe, and Japan whose members "increasingly appear to be separate regions of the same political system rather than distinct ones."[1] Some observers give this community a restricted geographical scope, largely confining it to the nations of Western Europe and North America, while others speak more expansively of "the international community" or, yet more extravagantly, of "one world." As the current debates over NATO expansion, China policy, and the clash of civilizations attest, how big this community is or might become excites some of the most bitter controversies in the discussion of American foreign policy.

Though some have shared Woodrow Wilson's dream that the American system might become universal, it has never done so in fact. The American system since the Second World War, like the one inaugurated by the Constitution, has been a system of states within a larger system of states. Our political vocabulary, with its stark antinomies between "domestic" and "foreign", or "nation" and "world", fails to capture the mixed character of the post-1789 and post-1947 systems, both of which existed in a sort of twilight between the world of the civil state and the world of international relations. Equally unhelpful is the distinction drawn by political scientists between "the unit level" and "the systemic level", for these associations are not only systems of states within a larger system of states but

[1] See Michael Doyle, "An International Liberal Community", in Graham Allison and Gregory F. Treverton, *Rethinking America's Security* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1992), pp. 307-33; Max Singer and Aaron Wildavsky, *The Real World Order: Zones of Peace, Zones of Turmoil* (Chatham, NJ: Chatham House Publishers, 1993), p. 3; Daniel Deudney and G. John Ikenberry, "The Logic of the West", *World Policy Journal* (Winter 1993/94), pp. 17-25. See also Deudney's insightful essay on "The Philadelphian System", *International Organization* (Spring 1995), pp. 191-228, his apt term for the American "states-union" from 1787 to 1861.

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units made up of other units. Confronted with associations that are both units and systems (and which, being both, are not exactly either one), we are like Pufendorf puzzling over the irregular constructions of Central Europe, wondering how a *unum* could be made out of such a *pluribus*. Neither "anarchy" on the one side nor "empire" on the other—the one with its image of hostility and unconditional rivalry, the other with its connotations of rule and dominance—expresses the character and logic of these associations. Nevertheless, one of the ways in which these two federative systems are alike is that throughout their respective histories they were described in both ways—by some as an overbearing imperium that exercised despotic sway over the political space in which it operated, and by others as an empty shell ever tending toward dissolution and collapse.

Not a Departure, A Return

THERE IS NO theme more common in writings on twentieth-century American foreign policy than that of fundamental transformations. As the conventional rendering has it, in the late 1940s and early 1950s a nation that for over a century took counsel from Washington's warnings against foreign alliances contracted an enduring case of pactomania. A nation once insular and isolationist became cosmopolitan and interventionist. A nation that once enjoyed a condition of "free security", surrounded by its oceanic moats and protected by the British navy, became highly conscious of—even obsessed by—mortal threats to its security. And a nation that once made a fetish of unilateral methods suddenly saw itself as the leader of multilateral coalitions and partnerships.

Most observers have looked approvingly on these "radical changes", insisting that they were a necessary adjustment to new circumstances; some have bemoaned them as entailing the passage from republic to empire. But either way, the fact of radical discontinuity is seldom questioned. Questioned it should be, however, for the characteristic ideas of twentieth-century American internationalism may more persuasively be seen as a return to, rather than a departure from, historic traditions—a sort of grand unfolding, in different circumstances and on a larger geographical scale, of aspirations that were central to the American experiment from 1776 onwards.

The first assumption that must be cast aside is the idea that eighteenth and nineteenth-century Americans had no experience of the security dilemmas that were second nature to Europeans after the emergence in the 1500s and 1600s of the modern state system. "The anguishing dilemmas of security that tormented European nations", writes Henry Kissinger, summarizing this widely held view, "did not touch America for nearly 150 years."[2] The truth is otherwise: Both of the central elements in the early American credo—the "union" and "independence" of Washington's Farewell Address—responded directly to those anguishing dilemmas.

Given the ambitions of Britain, France, and Spain in North America, the desire to remain separate and distinct from the European system of alliances was just that—a desire and not an accomplished fact for at least half a century after 1776. But the view expressed by Kissinger is misleading for an even more basic reason. The great American fear from 1776 to 1861 was not so much that America would become ruinously entangled in the European system as that European precedents and practices would take firm root within America—that America, in other words, would *become* the European system. The desire of America's early leaders to escape that fate was the most important factor in the American Founding.

Ironically, however, the founders were not entirely successful in making that escape. For several generations after 1789, the country was haunted by an imagined sequence of events that would lead from disunion and secession to inter-sectional rivalry, war, and despotism.

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[2]Henry Kissinger, *Diplomacy* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1994), p. 20.

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Though all Americans wished to escape this downward spiral, their public debates and private letters were filled with warnings that they were just a step away from falling into it. The whole dynamic of American politics from 1789 to 1861 lay in the occurence, about every ten years, of a monumental sectional crisis that would be averted only through an unexpected turn of events or an inspired act of statesmanship. Because disunion was widely understood to be a virtual synonym for war, the threat of force was not banished from the system. The beast still sat there, with a grin on its face, insinuating itself into the rivalries of the sections. Far from being indifferent to the security problems that have drawn the anxious attention of internationalists in the twentieth century, Americans were obsessed by them from the critical period just before the making of the Constitution until the Civil War. They did not enjoy the alternative of withdrawing from "the state system" because they were squarely in the middle of one.

The true American security problem, then, lay not so much in the ambition of foreign powers as in the rivalries among the sections themselves, as different in their interests and character, noted Pierce Butler in 1787, as Russia and Turkey. A wide range of observers in both America and Europe believed that the "natural" course of events would entail the splintering of the Union and the emergence of a system of regional confederacies, and it was the deeply rooted character of this belief that explains why the making of the Constitution and the perpetuation of the Union was so often regarded as a miracle. Under these circumstances, security was anything but free.

The more perfect union that established the conditions for American security was not the product of nature but of art. It had a fragile, artificial, and experimental character—features strikingly conveyed by Rufus Choate, a nationalist and a Whig, in 1850:

> While our State governments must exist almost of necessity, and with no effort from within or without, the UNION of the States is a totally different creation—more delicate, more artificial, more recent, far more truly a mere production of the reason and the will—standing in far more need of an ever-surrounding care, to preserve and repair it.

Whereas the states were "natural" and were "a single and uncompounded substance", the Union was "an artificial aggregation of such particles", "a community miscellaneous and widely scattered", "a system of bodies advancing slowly through a resisting medium."[3]

The American-led multilateral alliance system after World War II may be fairly described in similar terms; observers were acutely conscious of its fragility, and of its need for "an ever-surrounding care, to preserve and repair it." Indeed, if the dynamics of early American history cannot be understood without reference to the fear of a raging state system emerging in the New World, it is equally the case that twentieth-century American internationalism cannot be fully understood without seeing it against the background of the earlier American experience with federal union. A wide range of assumptions, fears, and hopes that were characteristic of American reflection on their federal union entered again into the thinking of Americans when they considered the purposes of U.S. foreign policy in the twentieth century. Often unconsciously, we have been duplicating the thought experiments of our forebears, seeking a set of relationships with friends and allies that would do for regional or world order in the twentieth century what federal union did for the American states and sections in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.

When Americans came to the realization in the twentieth century that North America could no longer be a world unto itself, they searched for associations and partners that would "domesticate" or "constitutionalize" the anarchy of the state system. That search has

[3]Speech of November 26, 1850 in Samuel Gilman Brown, ed., *The Works of Rufus Choate* (Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1862), vol. II, pp. 314-15.

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entailed great variety in the associations envisaged: the community of English-speaking peoples, a universal association for collective security, a Western hemisphere community, an Atlantic Community, a Great Power concert, a federal state binding the Atlantic democracies or the world, the United Nations—all had their successive advocates before 1945. There was, however, something dream-like and insubstantial about most of these visions. While sometimes inspiring, they usually ran aground on the rocks of experience. Just as it took Americans over three decades in the years before 1787 to find a suitable middle way between the competing specters of anarchy and despotism, it took a comparable length of time—from, roughly, 1914 to 1949—to discover the lineaments of that resolution in the twentieth century. The security and economic system whose golden anniversary we are now commemorating was the product of that discovery, though at the moment of creation in the late 1940s no one could be certain which elements in the makeshift response would prove enduring.

In a celebrated phrase, Frederick Jackson Turner once called the United States "a federation of sections" and a "union of potential nations." The significance of the section in American history, Turner persuasively observed, "is that it is the faint image of a European nation and that we need to reexamine our history in the light of this fact."[4] I will be suggesting in this essay that the significance of the post-World War II multilateral alliance system is that it is the faint image of the American union, and that we need to re-examine our diplomatic traditions and contemporary purposes in the light of *that* fact.

The Federal Principle and American Internationalism

THAT THERE should exist these similarities should not appear too surprising, once it is understood that the fundamental problem to which both early American constitutionalism and twentieth-century internationalism were responding was substantially the same: How to avoid the perils of—how, hence, to reform the bases of—the Westphalian system. The basic questions, inevitably, were very similar: Will democracies maintain peaceful relations, or are they subject to the same predatory impulses and systemic pressures that lead other states to war? Will ties associated with commerce promote pacific relations among states, or will such entanglements lead to increased friction and promote conflict? Can two distinct conceptions of liberty—that of individual human rights and of the "liberty of states"—be reconciled when they conflict? Can republican states successfully cooperate in the absence of a common government?

The similarity in the political speculation of these two otherwise very different ages also suggests why it is mistaken to view early American statecraft as wholly or even primarily "unilateralist", as is invariably affirmed in the standard histories of American diplomacy. It is certainly true that Americans were determined to avoid entangling alliances with European states. The principal reason for this determination, however, was that they had made the most entangling of alliances among themselves, and they well understood that involvement in the European system might launch them on a path that would lead to the dissolution of the Union.

To make that Union work, Americans articulated a great many of the ideas that have informed the theory and practice of international cooperation since World War II (which have gone under the largely synonymous terms of multilateralism and internationalism). Traits common to both systems include: 1) the peculiar importance attached to "good faith" or credibility; 2) the affirmation of the norms of codetermination and concurrent majority; 3) the acceptance of the need for "reciprocal concession" and "diffuse reciprocity"; 4) the belief that "all for one and one for all" must be

[4]Frederick Jackson Turner, *The Significance of Sections in American History* (New York: Henry Holt, 1932), p. 50.

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the basis of their security doctrine, because of the conviction that if they did not hang together they would be doomed to hang separately; 5) the emphasis placed on what Madison called "the vital principle" of the equality of states; and 6) the insight that the reduction or elimination of trade barriers within the union would provide a firm basis for the prosperity of all its members.

To insist on the family resemblance between the ideas articulated in these two epochs—and hence to draw a parallel between early American federalism and twentieth-century American internationalism—admittedly takes us onto hazardous linguistic terrain, for each of these terms (like all the other "isms" in the political vocabulary) have borne a wide variety of meanings. It is not unusual—indeed, it is altogether characteristic—for political concepts to undergo an astonishing revolution in signification, in which they come to mean precisely the opposite of what they once did. This has happened, of course, to "liberalism" and "conservatism." It has also occurred to federal union and its various cognates (federation, federalism, federative system). If this comparison is to be sustained it needs to be borne in mind that what the statesmen of the late eighteenth century understood "federal" to mean is very different from the understandings prevailing today. The consolidation and centralization that have taken place in all federal states, together with the formalization of the concept by scholars (who now distinguish it sharply from a confederal arrangement), take us into a conceptual universe different from that which the framers inhabited.

At the heart of the federal principle, as traditionally conceived, lies the idea of a covenant or *foedus* (the etymological root of federal). As Rufus Davis has suggested, the covenant, together with the "synonymous ideas of promise, commitment, undertaking, or obligating, vowing and plighting one's word", implies two other things besides keeping faith: "it involves the idea of cooperation, reciprocity, mutuality"; and it "betokens the need for some measure of predictability, expectation, constancy, and reliability in human relations."[5] These three concepts—commitment, reciprocity, predictability—are closely associated with contemporary ideas of international cooperation, and they were endlessly elaborated in debates over the nature and character of federal union from 1787 to 1861. Yet no one would think of ascribing primacy to these values in characterizing the relationship that now exists in our system between the national government and the states. So, too, the sense in which the Constitution might be described as federal in its foundations—that is, as a compact among the people of the states—has been altogether lost, and it would be far more accurate, despite a few recent Supreme Court protestations to the contrary, to describe the United States today as a unitary state organized on the principle of devolution, with the states enjoying no more autonomy than the national government thinks it expedient to bestow upon them. The cumulative result of the Civil War, the New Deal, and the Great Society has worked a revolution in our constitutional structure. Though there is still a division of powers between the general government and the states that may institutionally be described as a variant of "federalism", the federal values that once informed this institutional structure have been virtually obliterated in our polity. *But those values have not disappeared.* On the contrary, they have migrated to and now inform our key relationships within the democratic alliance.

The attraction of the federal principle is that it promises a way of simultaneously reaffirming both individuality and commonality in the relationship among political groups. For this reason it may be thought of as "an exercise in the difficult art of separation", as proposing devices "to cope with the problem

[5]Rufus S. Davis, *The Federal Principle: A Journey Through Time in Quest of a Meaning* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978), pp. 38, 3, 215-16.

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of how distinct communities can live a common life together without ceasing to be distinct communities", as a "coming together to stay apart."[6] Such ideas were basic to early American federalism. It was, for example, one of the central arguments of those who advocated the ratification of the Constitution that the rights and separate identities of the states would be far more secure under the proposed system than under any other practicable alternative. American internationalists have often appealed to the same basic proposition, holding that the national interest as well as the ideals that define us as a people could only be advanced within a framework that ensured security and prosperity to all peoples within the family of democratic nations.

The Partition of Cares

THE SIMILARITIES between the federal principle and the internationalist idea entitle us to say that they are not two separate traditions of thought but are rather distinct though intermingled currents within the same tradition. They each play variations on the idea that there exists a kind of ascending or descending scale of human needs, communities, identities, and loyalties for which appropriate institutional expression must be found. There is a passage in Jefferson that well illustrates the character of this task. Writing at a time when his distrust of centralization had risen again to a high pitch, Jefferson held that

> It is not by the consolidation, or concentration of powers, but by their distribution, that good government is effected. Were not this great country already divided into States, that division must be made, that each might do for itself what concerns itself directly, and what it can so much better do than a distant authority. Every State is again divided into counties, each to take care of what lies within its local bounds; each county again into townships or wards, to manage minuter details; and every ward into farms, to be governed each by its individual proprietor. Were we directed from Washington when to sow, and when to reap, we should soon want bread. It is by this partition of cares, descending in gradation from general to particular, that the mass of human affairs may be best managed, for the good and prosperity of all.

In this perfect explication of what has become familiar as the principle of "subsidiarity", Jefferson was writing as an individualist, a localist, a federalist, and a sectionalist; his intent was to deny to the general government powers that went a scintilla beyond those granted by the constitutional compact. But he was also, in his own estimation, writing as a nationalist; it was his firm conviction that the union could only survive if the powers of the general government were sharply circumscribed—that the clock would break if the spring were wound too tightly. Jefferson's great adversary, Alexander Hamilton, had the opposite fear—that of dissolution. He was pessimistic that the Constitution of 1787 would be sufficiently strong to countervail the deeper and more natural loyalties to locality, state, and section that would exist under the projected system.

The history of federal union involved the continual interplay between Hamiltonian and Jeffersonian proclivities. America invariably found herself torn between centripetal and centrifugal forces. The great American historians of the nineteenth century—George Bancroft, Francis Parkman, Henry Adams—all recurred to this story line, finding in American history "an intensely dramatic journey along a narrow path of moderation" between anarchy and despotism, or complete decentralization and total centralization.[7]

A very similar tension has characterized the history of the post-World War II American system. The fear, so often expressed

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[6]Samuel V. LaSelva, *The Moral Foundations of Canadian Federalism* (Montreal: McGill Queen's University Press, 1996), pp. 40, 46.

[7]Richard C. Vitzthun, *The American Compromise* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1974).

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over the last fifty years, that the alliance would splinter is very Hamiltonian, as are the programs and institutions that were seen as crucial in arresting the centrifugal forces inherent in confederacies: the grand financial settlement of the late 1940s and early 1950s, the standing military forces effectively integrated with those of other nations, the commercial interdependence encouraged with Europe and Japan, and the reliance on the power and discretion of the American executive. But the Jeffersonian idea of an "empire of liberty" also informed the institutions and practices of the post-World War II system. That republics might voluntarily cooperate with one another in pursuit of common objectives, that such a union might be held together through sentiment rather than the sword, that the federating republics might jointly resolve to respect common principles like the equality of states, and hold steadfast to a common veneration of free government—all these ideas are distinctly Jeffersonian. In both epochs, these primordial American concerns were in fundamental tension, yet each was necessary and vital to balance the other.

As Jefferson's remarks attest, the problem of matching institutions to communities involves more than simply reconciling general interests and particular identities, in the way envisaged by the dualistic frameworks of internationalism and federalism. Recognition must also be accorded to a range of other values, including those embodied in individual freedom and in the dense loyalties and "little platoons" of civil society. The Founders, in keeping with the enlightened political speculation of their age, understood that their problem was to create the political and legal framework that would best correspond with this ascending scale of human needs and loyalties. It is our problem today. The return to mixed loyalties and identities that is a distinguishing feature of the contemporary period makes the political thought of their pre-nationalist age strikingly relevant to our post-nationalist era, much more so than the political thought of the intervening age of hypernationalism from the 1860s to the 1940s. The kind of nationalism to which we are called by writers like Michael Lind, who is hostile to both federalism and internationalism, is a wholly inadequate response to the task of finding the appropriate partition of cares: the nationalist sun that such writers worship extinguishes the light from all the other stars in the sky.

To grasp the essentials of this task is not to resolve it; its character is one of surpassing complexity. There is, however, considerable evidence that the existing partition of cares is seriously disordered. Daniel Bell's prescient observation that "the national state has become too small for the big problems in life, and too big for the small problems"[8] nicely summarizes the heart of the difficulty: that, on the one hand, the national government—indeed, government generally—has taken on so many different functions and penetrated so many areas of life that it often appears as an alien and unresponsive Leviathan; and, on the other, that there exists a range of problems in security, commerce, finance, and the environment—the same areas of jurisdiction, with the exception of the last, granted to the federal government in 1787—that the American government cannot satisfactorily address without the effective cooperation of other nation-states.

Structural Crisis

THE VARIOUS THESES advanced here invite us to reconsider in basic ways the historic evolution of American statecraft. If the American confrontation with the Westphalian system is not a late arriving phenomenon of the twentieth century but central to the American experiment from the beginning; if security was never "free" but was dearly purchased by a Constitution that was "no more than a profoundly wise agreement to differ"[9];

[8]Daniel Bell, "The Future World Disorder", *Foreign Policy* (Summer 1977), p. 132.

[9]Rep. Henry Meigs (Dem.-NY), January 26, 1820, *Debates and Proceedings in Congress*, 16th Congress, lst session, p. 926.

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and if the ideas commonly associated with twentieth-century multilateralism and internationalism are closely akin to the norms and purposes promoted by federal union—then the way is clear for redrawing the historic map of American statecraft. In this revised picture, internationalism appears not so much as a departure from historic traditions as a resumption of them, though with a different set of institutions and on a wider geographical scale.

There are, indeed, crucial institutional differences between the constitutional partnership of free nations established after the Second World War and the union of different republics established in 1787. Of these differences, the most obvious is that the Constitution provided a common government for the members of the Union, whereas the post-World War II system rested on an institutional base that is best described as "confederal." That institutional contrast, in turn, points to the interesting fact that the institutions that have distinguished the postwar system and that have worked reasonably well—the alphabet soup of NATO, IMF, IBRD, OECD, GATT, WTO, OAS, et al.—suffer from the same defects that, according to the framers of the Constitution, doomed all such confederal arrangements to dissolution. Even after a common government was established in 1787, many observers, including Tocqueville, found it difficult to believe "in the duration of a government whose task is to hold together forty different peoples spread over a surface equal to the half of Europe, to avoid rivalries, ambitions and struggles among them, and to unite the action of their independent ways for the accomplishment of the same plans." For essentially the same reasons, observers as disparate as Clarence Streit and Hans Morgenthau argued during the Cold War that the Western alliance would dissolve or succumb to external aggression unless it moved toward more centralized institutions.

The prophets of dissolution have not been borne out. The obituaries have been premature at best, utterly wrong at worst. The system did not dissolve during the Cold War but managed instead to rise repeatedly, like a bull market, over a wall of worry. Nor has it fallen apart after the end of that conflict, though it had been the Soviet threat at the end of World War II that brought it into being. It has, on the contrary, expanded its membership and functions, as may be observed in the prospective admission of new members to NATO, in the strengthening and larger membership of the GATT and WTO, and in the readiness of the OAS to guarantee democracy in the Western Hemisphere.

The role of American power in all of this has obviously been crucial, and indeed the federal analogy suggests a way of conceiving American leadership that best expresses its inner logic and function, which is to pursue the cooperative policies in security, trade, and finance normally associated with federative systems while also acting to arrest the "natural" tendency of confederations to fall apart. American power and leadership is to the post-World War II system what a common government was to the political system established by the Constitution—the crucial element, once missing, that made it workable.

The importance of American leadership since 1947 points to another vital difference between the two systems: to wit, that the United States dominated the creation of the post-World War II system in a way that no state or section dominated the American union in 1787. The constitutional compact of 1787, whether conceived as a covenant among the people, the states, or the sections (it was, in fact, all three) was essentially one among equals, whereas in the 1940s a primal inequality marked the creation of the postwar multilateral alliance system, founded when America bestrode the world like a colossus. Over time, however, this difference between the two systems became less pronounced. By the time of the "great war of sections", a marked inequality had grown up between the North and the South, and indeed this phenomenon of unequal growth constituted one of the leading causes of the war. The post-World War II system has also been afflicted by the phe-

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nomenon of unequal growth, but in the opposite direction: stark inequality among the core nations of the democratic alliance has given way to a greater equality.

The fears of the 1980s that Europe and Japan would grow faster than the United States have proved unfounded, it is true, thus confirming Joseph Nye's observation that the unequal growth of the three decades after 1945 was primarily due to the "World War II effect." But it is also true that the burden-sharing problems to which the initial prolonged period of unequal growth gave rise have never been addressed to the satisfaction of the American public. The great question that uneven growth posed for America's federal system was whether a consensual union could be sustained in the face of growing inequality; the great question that uneven growth has posed for the post-World War II system is whether cooperation can be sustained in the face of growing equality.

The need for American hegemony to counteract the defects inherent in all confederations, together with the weakening of American hegemony entailed by unequal growth, points to a permanent structural crisis within the alliance of liberal democracies. The federal analogy is illuminating not only because it highlights the features of this structural problem, but also because it suggests ways in which it may be mitigated, if not exactly overcome. That this malady *may* prove fatal is undoubtedly true; that it *must* end with the dissolution of the system is unduly pessimistic. Whether it does or does not must rest, in the end, on the quality of our leadership.

One danger is that of American unilateralism, which stands in the same relation to the democratic alliance (and poses the same danger) as sectionalism did to the American union. The proclivity toward unilateralism is exacerbated by the "fragmentation and hubris" of which James Schlesinger recently warned in these pages. If it persists, it is a habit that will surely destroy the postwar system over time. Palpably absurd—and contrary to the basic presuppositions of American constitutionalism—is the idea that American power, unlike that of any other state, needs neither check nor balance. To act in a federal spirit—by respecting, in particular, the values of codetermination and consent—would help provide that check, and would be of considerable assistance in counteracting the distracted arrogance that Schlesinger has diagnosed. The pre-eminent position of the United States rests upon the belief that the exercise of American power is harnessed to the general purposes of the federation of free nations. If that belief is not well founded, the United States becomes just another imperial power, doomed to elicit the same hostility and countervailing alliances that imperial powers have always provoked in the past.

It is also true, conversely, that the prospects of the system rest upon the willingness of our partners to share its burdens fairly. As the market of first resort, the lender of last resort, and the ultimate backstop against large-scale aggression, the United States bore the largest share of the burdens associated with the running of the system during the Cold War. That the American people should wish to shed some of those burdens is understandable, for they believe, not unreasonably, that "this heavy headed revel East and West / Has made us traduced and taxed of other nations."

Unilateral dictation by the United States and free-riding by allies are the two great vices that have fed on each other in the past and that, if recklessly indulged, would form a cancer on the system in the future. Like other forms of vice, both propensities are encouraged strongly by nature: the peculiar structure of this fifty year-old system constitutes a standing invitation to act in a way that would destroy it over time. All the more reason, therefore, for the friends of the democratic alliance to stand resolutely against both proclivities—on the maxim, as Katharine Hepburn told Humphrey Bogart in *The African Queen*, that "Human nature, Mr. Allnutt, is what we're put into this world to rise above."

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Larger than Nation, Smaller than World

ONE OF THE curious aspects of the rhetoric surrounding U.S. foreign policy is the tendency of many observers to pose a false choice between isolationism and universalism. Too often our alternative is conceived as one between "the atom and the cosmos", as Walter Lippmann complained in the early 1950s, and we are asked to choose between a narrow version of American nationalism—the "America First, Second, and Third" of Patrick Buchanan—and a universalism that embraces all mankind within its reformist aspirations. The analogy with federal union encourages a way of thinking that occupies a middle ground between these extremes. It recognizes that the United States is a vital part of a community larger than itself, but one that does not embrace the entire world. It enables us to distinguish between encouraging democracy in the Western Hemisphere or in Central Europe and simultaneously drawing back from an indiscriminate policy of democratic enlargement in areas like much of Asia and Africa, where the political consensus for such a policy does not exist. It enables us to distinguish between the construction of a security community in Europe—part of the civic union to which we belong—and the commitment to a universalistic doctrine of collective security that would oblige us to intervene anywhere and everywhere. It lights up a path equidistant from the isolationist and the imperial temptations, rejecting the simple-minded notion that we must choose between these equally disagreeable alternatives.

To understand our position in this way does not resolve the baffling questions associated with specifying exactly the membership, boundaries, and purposes of this larger community of freedom. Trying to understand this question in the 1950s, the distinguished historian Hans Kohn observed that

> The frontiers of modern Western civilization and of the Atlantic Community are geographically undetermined. One can as well say that no nation qua nation belongs to it and that all people potentially can join it. Italy under Mussolini, Germany under Hitler, Russia under Lenin did not belong, and did not wish to belong, to the Western community of individual liberty. Today Germany and Italy belong, and tomorrow Russia may belong.[10]

Kohn's understanding of this community's potential for expansion neglected the factors of strategic importance, economic weight, historical encumbrance, and political affinity that have made the trilateral relationship linking Europe, America, and Japan so central to our understanding of this community's core membership. He also exaggerated the ease with which any people can join it. At the same time, it does seem too narrow to limit it, as Samuel P. Huntington has done, to those nation-states whose historic roots lie in Western civilization. If we recall that one of the purposes associated with federative systems is not to submerge everything in a bland homogeneity but rather to affirm both individuality and commonality—to come together in order to stay apart—the civilizational differences that separate a Turkey or Japan from the West should not constitute insuperable obstacles to effective cooperation. Surely, too, we should recognize that there is scope for different types of membership within the system. It should be possible, in any event, to recognize that this larger community is transcivilizational and has outgrown its origin in Western civilization without passing over to the universal pretensions that Huntington rightly condemns as "misguided, arrogant, false, and dangerous."[11]

The federal analogy holds a lesson here as well, for a recurring theme in early America

[10]Hans Kohn, *Reflections on Modern History: The Historian and Human Responsibility* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1978), p. 305.

[11]Samuel P. Huntington, "The West and the World", *Foreign Affairs* (November/December 1996), pp. 28-46.

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was that too great or rapid an expansion of the empire of liberty would prepare the ground for its dissolution. It did so in 1763 as well as in 1848, with the experience and outcome of the two great wars of territorial expansion that ended on those dates bearing a close relationship to the wars of secession that followed. The analogy is merely suggestive, for it is virtually impossible to imagine the circumstances under which the nations of the democratic alliance would fight one another today, and equally difficult to imagine that this federation of free nations might be preserved through force. Nevertheless, that centrifugal forces may be introduced into this system by too rapid or extensive an expansion is a danger, as James Monroe observed in 1822, that needs to be "looked at with profound attention, as one of a very serious character."

Despite these tensions, excellent reasons remain for placing the health, strength, and preservation of the community of free peoples at the center of American foreign policy. Such an association, to imagine its basic lineaments, would seek to achieve the benefits of federal union without sacrificing independence or sovereignty. It would have the strength of a great empire but allow for the internal autonomy and free development of its member nations. It would register the voices of the nations within this great federacy through a system in which representation is sometimes "virtual" and not "actual." It would somehow find a way to be fair in burdens exacted, without a coercive apparatus to make it so. And it would take as its fundamental object and justification the preservation of free institutions while nevertheless relying (like that earlier federative system in American history) on example rather than coercive crusading in seeking the extension of such institutions. That is a tall order for American leadership, and it must not be supposed that our leaders have invariably taken to heart the norms and purposes suggested by the federal analogy. But it is a worthy aspiration that best corresponds with the deepest interests and historic purposes of the United States.

It must be admitted, however, that there is something unnatural about the durability of such an association. The end of the Cold War, by depriving the Western alliance of the threat that initially brought it into existence, has weakened its cohesion. The political loyalties of the peoples that comprise it still run largely to their nation-states or to local and regional attachments within them. So, too, a realistic view must acknowledge that democratic states have in the past displayed a fatal tendency toward disunited action and *sauve qui peut*. Indeed, celebrants of the "democratic peace" often fail to recognize the extent to which the founders of the two creations understood that democracy was a necessary but not a sufficient condition of peace, and that successful cooperation among such polities had to be regarded not as a law of political behavior but as a hard-won achievement—a defiance of history rather than a working out of its immutable laws.

The democratic alliance also lacks a common government to give efficacy to its actions. This is not, one hastens to add, a cause for regret. Bringing the Atlantic democracies together in a common government, as was proposed by the Atlantic Unionists in the late 1940s, would inevitably have driven them further apart had such an initiative been taken by the American government. The experience of centralization in America, as in nearly all other federal states, has taught a sobering lesson in this regard. But to think of the Atlantic relationship or the broader relationship among the democracies in federal terms does not lead irresistibly to the conclusion that a common government is necessary or desirable. A theme no less closely associated with the federal tradition is that central institutions must be limited in their powers and in the scope of their control. Recently, advocates for a single currency in Europe may well have stepped across an admittedly hazy line—one that separates the kind of centralization that contributes to greater unity from the kind that spawns, through its excesses, even greater disunity. A common government linking the democratic alliance would certainly do so. The larger

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point nevertheless remains: To accept that a common government is neither possible nor desirable still leaves us with the divisive forces inherent in confederacies, and must reinforce the doubts about the future durability of this civic union.

These disintegrative forces, then, are real enough. If there is a remedy for them it is likely to be found not in a grand institutional overhaul but in a deeper appreciation of the norms and purposes that hold this community together. It consists of the recognition that, with unity, the security and prosperity of this democratic community can be assured, and that with disunity all bets are off. It requires us to stifle the sectional jealousies and asperities that perpetually arise in free countries, recognizing that the security and prosperity of our allies are good for us, as ours are good for them, rather than engaging in a fierce geo-economic competition that would beggar all of us together. Finally, it means condemning the arrogant unilateralism that sometimes issues from Washington, on the understanding that this community cannot survive unless it is rooted in consent.

Here, too, we may take a leaf from the book of federal union. Throughout the period from the American Revolution to the Civil War, the great antinomies of political life—rise or decline, prosperity or wretchedness, peace or war—were in the common opinion not merely bound up with, but subordinate to, the fate of the Union. This was the prism through which every interest was refracted, the oracle to consult if one wished to know the future. That we should look with a comparable understanding on the union of free states today is a proposition I commend to the reader.

At the time of the creation of the democratic alliance, Sir Alfred Zimmern observed to an American audience that

> For as far ahead as political thought can see, the United States will occupy a preponderant position in the world, and the people of the United States, who might have set the crown of world empire on their brows, have decided to share their power in a constitutional partnership of free nations. Thus free nations everywhere are called, at a moment in world history corresponding to the moment of 1787 in your own constitutional annals, to a task of political construction.[12]

This is a fine calling that is as appropriate a purpose for the next fifty years as it was for the last. Let us hope that American diplomacy will merit so generous a judgment in the future. □

[12] "How Can Europe Unite?", *Vital Speeches*, XVII, 677-80 (September 1, 1951).

Functional Chaos

Everyone had kind words for China, particularly its success in choking off inflation while maintaining economic growth. Yet to many attendees China's success is hard to fathom. After all, its banking system is wheezing under a mountain of nonperforming loans, and its state sector is bleeding red ink. 'Chaos theory explains China', says Vikram Nehru, who led the team that wrote 'China 2020', a major World Bank study. 'On a micro level, there is chaos. But on a macro level, it somehow works.'

Far Eastern Economic Review, *reporting discussion at the annual World Bank/International Monetary Fund gathering in Hong Kong.*

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The Tory Debacle

Is Thatcher to Blame?

Jonathan Clarke

THE DEVASTATING rebuff administered to the Conservative Party by British voters in May of this year came as no surprise. The party was tired, publicly split on policy, and scandal-ridden. The voters did the party a favor by granting it respite from the rigors of office. But where does it go from here?

Ten years ago Lord Carrington wrote in his memoirs of the advantages of his time in Australia as governor-general in lending perspective to his assessment of Britain's true interests. Physical distance allowed him to see the wood from the trees. His insight can be used today in analyzing where the Conservatives went wrong. For the future health of the conservative cause in Britain, it is important that the party use its downtime well. It must get its post-mortem right.

Viewed from across the Atlantic, there is no mystery about how the Conservative Party was brought to its knees. This feat was accomplished by a leader who foisted upon it an untenable, crassly inconsistent policy based on a mixture of arrogance, ignorance, self-indulgence, and self-deception. The leader was Margaret Thatcher. The policy was Euro-rejectionism. The Conservatives have rid themselves of the former, but the latter lives on in the parliamentary party. In rejecting as its new leader former Chancellor of the Exchequer Kenneth Clarke in favor of William Hague, a Thatcher protégé, the party has shown that it is now dominated by those who believe that the only significant events in European history are the battles of Agincourt, Trafalgar, and Waterloo. This is not an electable party. If it is to regain the voters' confidence, it must purge itself of Thatcher's Euro-rejectionist incubus.

This thesis may require a little elaboration, but in fact the argument is straightforward. Compare the following quotations:

> We must create the genuine common market in goods and services which is envisaged in the Treaty of Rome and will be crucial to our ability to meet the U.S. and Japanese technological challenge.

> We have not successfully rolled back the frontiers of the state in Britain only to see them re-imposed at the European level with a European superstate exercising a new dominance from Brussels.

The second is well known. Taken from the then-Prime Minister Thatcher's famous October 1988 speech to the College of Europe in Bruges, this represents her at the flood tide of her anti-federalist Euro-rejectionism. It is quoted with relish in her autobiography *The Downing Street Years* to illustrate her point that, in her own delicate phraseolo-

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gy, "I had had as much of the European 'ideal' as I could take."

The authorship of the first quotation seems more problematic. Its *communautaire* orthodoxy is reminiscent of an arch-federalist Brussels-based *fonctionnaire* who has "slipped his leash" (this phrase too belongs to Thatcher, used in reference to Jacques Delors, then-president of the European Commission), and who is scheming to foist his Napoleonic centralism on the unsuspecting Anglo-Saxons. But not so. Once again the speaker is Margaret Thatcher, on this occasion at the Fontainebleau European Summit of June 1984. She adopted this stance to show her European credentials, following the bruising decade-long debate about British financial contributions to Europe. In doing so, she launched the integrationist process that led to the Single European Act of 1985 and, by easily foreseeable extension, to the Maastricht Treaty of 1992 and to European Monetary Union.

Unsurprisingly, the 1984 speech receives no mention in Lady Thatcher's writings—or in those of her hagiographers. And when history confronts her with inconvenient facts, such as her first House of Commons speech as Tory leader in 1975 in which she robustly defended British EU membership, or her campaign in the same year for a positive vote on Harold Wilson's referendum over whether Britain should continue in Europe, she makes light of them by saying that these were Edward Heath's legacy.

To have admitted these facts would, of course, have exposed the fatal implausibility underlying Thatcher's European policy: namely that, rather than having to make the best of the relationship with Europe, Britain's leaders enjoyed the option of pursuing a non-EU-based alternative choice. As a rational person, Thatcher knew that this was the stuff of dreams and carefully avoided explicitly suggesting that Britain should leave Europe. However, anyone who saw her stiffen with misty pride whenever Old Glory was on display understood that, had it been available, Thatcher would have jumped at some kind of condominium pact with what she quaintly called the "new Europe across the Atlantic."

The manifest unworkability of this vision destroyed British influence in Europe. For the nation, the fruit was bitter: either British defeat or British opt-out. For the Prime Minister personally, the consequence was to strip away the aura of the Falklands victory and "Iron Lady" invincibility and to reveal her, in Geoffrey Howe's 1990 image, as a captain deliberately sabotaging her own team. When her own credibility was destroyed, so was that of the Conservative Party.

This foreign policy blunder was bad enough. But the fact that after her 1990 dismissal as party leader she waded ever more deeply into it compounded the problem. Where she should have helped John Major pursue hard-nosed calculation about how best to defend Britain's national interests in Europe, she indulged in romantic mythologizing about keeping the down-to-earth values of the Glorious Revolution safe from the utopian dreams of Europe's Jacobin intellectuals.

This clap-trap had two disastrous results. First, it opened a fissure in the Tory party so deep that in 1997 cabinet members were openly attacking each other on the hustings. Secondly, it destroyed public confidence in the Tories' ability to handle Britain's central foreign policy task. Torn apart by Thatcher's European folly, the Tories encountered a defeat that may deprive them of office for a generation.

The absurd part of this Euro-bashing myth is that it was wholly meretricious and self-serving. It was designed (and is maintained today) to disguise the fact that—apart from the anti-EU extremism of her latter years as prime minister and in retirement—Thatcher occupied a respectable place in the mainstream of British leadership opinion about Europe. Specifically, her outlook differed little from that of Harold Macmillan or Harold Wilson. Neither of these earlier prime ministers warmed to the idea of Europe. Macmillan in particular scorned the Six's first faltering steps. But both were converted to

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British membership through lack of an alternative, and both knew that, once in, Britain would often have to fight for her rights. Even Heath, by far the most pro-Europe of the Conservative prime ministers who negotiated Britain's accession, had no illusions about the sort of battles Britain would have to wage to defend her prerogatives. At his insistence, the accession document of 1972 contained specific language on this question.

This typically British approach was Thatcher's initial position. Indeed, she may have been somewhat more pro-Europe than average. From her first days in Parliament, she was a member of the European Union of Women, a pro-Europe advocacy group. She has recorded in her *Road to Power* that she was "wholeheartedly in favor of Britain's entry into the Common Market." In common with all her contemporaries, her reasoning revolved around trade and economics. This allowed her, as a member of Heath's cabinet at the time of the accession negotiations, to disregard Enoch Powell's warnings about potential European encroachment on British sovereignty as merely "technical." Later this same reasoning prompted her to go forward with the 1985 Single European Act that laid the foundation for the modern EU.

Had she stayed with this reasoning all might have been well. Her critics, even those like Geoffrey Howe and Douglas Hurd who are most contemptuous of her boorish antics, have conceded that many of her positions made sense. Her dogged demands in 1979-84 for a reduction in Britain's budgetary payments to Europe, for example, brought home to her European colleagues that centralized overspending could not continue. Her emphasis on local responsibility established the now-sacrosanct principle of "subsidiarity" in the European decision-making process, whereby decisions are devolved down to the lowest possible level.

These accomplishments were considerable. But they were not enough for Thatcher. Deriving a sense of Anglo-Saxon superiority from her redoubtable Falklands victory, she began to wallow in the sentiment that the European structures were "quintessentially un-English." (Whether this also means un-Welsh, un-Scots, and un-Irish will necessarily be left to the imagination, for unfortunately there are now no Conservative Members of Parliament from these countries to enlighten us.)

The sentiment that, in terms of culture, the EU was irredeemably alien led Thatcher into dangerous waters. Not only did it convince her that saying "No, No, No" amounted to a sufficient European policy, but it also pushed her off her original (mainstream) position of defending British interests from within the EU. This was the position she had advanced with considerable tactical finesse at the 1988 Brussels European Council, where she traded concessions on structural funds in return for a long-term guarantee of Britain's budgetary rebate.

She now deserted that position. In her heart she began to question the very principles on which the EU was based. "Were British democracy and our traditional sense of fairness", she records herself as asking, "to be subordinated to the demands of a remote European bureaucracy resting on very different traditions?" She began to act as though she were the first person to discover that there was a potential conflict between British EU membership and British sovereignty.

The logical conclusion of this position, of course, went way beyond skepticism. It was that Britain had no place in the EU. Though she did not dare say so explicitly, Thatcher was now intimating to the British that they should contemplate leaving the EU. Nationalist statements on these lines started to appear in the British press. "Up yours, Delors" ran a famous headline in a British tabloid.

Amusing though this knock-about act was, it also represented the point at which Thatcher lost contact with broad public opinion and thus launched her party on its nose-dive. The poll data should have made this obvious to her. Starting from the 1975 referendum, British voters—whether in real votes or in opinion polls—have almost always

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rejected the idea of withdrawal, usually by significant majorities. The 1975 referendum went 67-33 against withdrawal. This pattern was the rule throughout the Thatcher years. Whereas at the height of the 1980 budgetary crisis opinion split 26-65 against continued membership, this attitude was not sustained. By 1991 opinion had reversed itself, and despite eleven years of Thatcher's Euro-bashing, opinion ran 62-28 in favor of continued membership. These numbers have now narrowed, but 1997 polls still show support for outright withdrawal at under 20 percent. The risible showing of the rabidly anti-EU Referendum Party in the May election reinforces the point.

None of this means that the British are enthusiastic about the EU—as their answers to specific questions make clear. On monetary union, for example, or the powers of the European Parliament, the British, including the committedly pro-EU Liberal Democrats, betray a fair degree of suspicion toward EU institutions. But this does not imply that the British came (or come) anywhere near to accepting Thatcher's implied line that they are better out than in.

Over the years the British have significantly changed their views on their national priorities. In 1969 they ranked the United States and the Commonwealth comfortably ahead of Europe as "most important to Britain." By 1993, Europe outranked the Commonwealth and the United States by factors of three and four, respectively. Even in today's climate of EU gloom, Europe is ranked in first place by twice as many people as the Commonwealth and the United States. They may not find the EU warm and cuddly, but they have a clear notion of their national interest.

AS THATCHER'S anti-EU fanaticism caused her to stray ever further from that notion, her downfall became merely a matter of time. In 1989 the Conservatives suffered a significant set-back in the elections for the European Parliament. When Britain's EU isolation became plain to see at successive meetings of the European Council in Dublin and Rome, the time for action had come. Howe's devastating House of Commons speech of November 13 of that year, in which he accused Thatcher of presenting the country with a "false antithesis, a bogus dilemma" on EU matters, launched the Tory leadership contest that was eventually won by Major.

Thatcher learnt nothing from her rejection. Instead, she went onto the offensive. In her writings and speeches, particularly in the United States, she drew a highly tendentious contrast between the disintegration of central planning in Eastern Europe and its supposed reemergence in the EU. In taking this tack, she gave succor to the least responsible elements in her party. This, in turn, caused Major to flub his opportunity in 1992 to restore sense to Britain's EU posture. At that time, fresh from his surprising election victory, he could have secured parliamentary ratification of the Maastricht Treaty with a two-thirds majority. His failure to do so had the effect of delivering the Conservative Party to the Euro-rejectionists—and to the fratricidal strife that led to the 1997 debacle.

Of course, Thatcherism was and is about more than the EU. Her achievements on trade union reform, privatization, and the assertion of liberty will outlive her EU mistakes. Nonetheless, her perversity in this area has a long reach. It precipitated the first major crisis in Labour policymaking and will ensure that Britain is not among the first wave of EMU members. This means that, yet again, countries other than Britain will enjoy first dibs on setting the rules and habits of an EU institution that in the fullness of time Britain will undoubtedly need to join.

As the Tories begin their painful process of rebuilding, they need to ponder the Thatcher legacy dispassionately. A cool head will tell them that, thanks to Thatcher, they are at present saddled with an untenable European policy. In effect, this means their domestic policy is also untenable. With the opinion polls moving against Europe, they may be tempted to continue along this path, but the

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history of Britain's relationship with Europe strongly suggests that this will be a dead end.

Hague has inherited an unelectable party. The September 15 referendum on Scottish devolution (with Thatcher's opposition cited by *The Scotsman* as one of the reasons for the strong positive vote) showed that the party has not yet touched rock bottom. The turmoil following Hague's decision at the October party conference to commit the Conservatives to opposing Britain's entry into the European Monetary Union demonstrated that the party's internal divisions run as deep as ever.

On becoming Labour's leader in July 1994, Tony Blair faced a similarly dire situation. Having purged his party of its socialist undesirables, Blair now sits in Downing Street. If Hague really wishes to oust him, he needs to mete out the same treatment to his Thatcherite holdovers and diehards. Otherwise, British conservatism—together with the principles into which, before her anti-European aberration, Margaret Thatcher breathed so much new vitality—will join the ranks of the stuffed curiosities in the Natural History Museum. □

Responses to Clarke

John O'Sullivan:

JONATHAN CLARKE claims that the Tory Party lost the recent election (and is now unelectable) because Mrs. Thatcher foisted an unpopular "Euro-rejectionist" policy upon it. Among the difficulties with this theory are:

Mrs. Thatcher ceased to be Prime Minister seven years before the election defeat. In the intervening years, she had little or no influence on government policy. Those who sympathized with her views on Europe were excluded from ministries which dealt with European issues. And her speeches critical of the government's European policy—to which Clarke now attributes an irresistible power—were widely (and I think unfairly) dismissed as inspired by personal bitterness at the time. By themselves, these facts should be enough to demolish Clarke's argument. But there is more.

Those who determined policy for most of this period—namely, Chancellor Kenneth Clarke, Foreign Secretary Douglas Hurd, and Deputy Prime Minister Michael Heseltine—were strong supporters of European integration and the single currency. (Prime Minister John Major can best be characterized as a weak supporter of the same things.) They remained in charge of policy until election day. Surely that suggests *some* culpability.

Their best way of evading responsibility for defeat would be to argue that the Cabinet's European policy began to fray in the last two years of office, and that it disintegrated entirely in the election campaign. Why did this happen? Very simply: support for "Europe" and the single currency was increasingly unpopular with Tory MPs, the Tory party in the country, the general public, and even a majority of the Cabinet. (You would never guess this, incidentally, from Clarke's use of opinion polls, which is worthy of Willi Munzenberg. He cites the 20 percent support for the most extreme anti-European position, but not the majority opposition to a single currency and to further European integration.) There was strong pressure for a change in policy. But Kenneth Clarke and Michael Heseltine vetoed a clear statement of opposition to a single currency. Tory MPs—facing certain defeat and knowing from their canvassing that opposition to a single currency was almost the *only* popular policy available to the Tories—panicked and rebelled. Over two hundred Tory candidates

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declared themselves personally opposed to the euro. The party splintered publicly. Insofar as Clarke seeks to excuse John Major and his colleagues as policymakers from responsibility for the defeat, however, he condemns them as party managers.

Blaming this on Mrs. Thatcher is not analysis; it is astrology. As an occasional intellectual valet to the lady, I would be delighted to attribute the change in opinion to her speeches. Individuals may indeed have been influenced by them; I hope so. But mass or even party opinion is no longer swayed by Midlothian orations. The catalyst for the public was events—such as the European ban on British beef exports and the Spanish "poaching", sanctioned by the courts, of British fish stocks. For Tory politicians it was that "Europe" had gone from being an obstacle to socialism in the Seventies to being an obstacle to deregulated capitalism today. Perhaps they are wrong, but many German businessmen seem to agree with them.

Anyway, "Europe" was only a minor theme in the great symphony of Tory collapse. There were far more important reasons for it, including an epidemic of Tory scandals, both sexual and financial, that continued right up to election day; the loss of the crucial tax issue following several tax-raising budgets in the Major years; a general weariness with the same ministerial faces after eighteen years; the rise of an acceptable opposition party in the form of "New Labour"; and above all the fact that the Tories had thrown away their reputation as the party of economic competence and so were unable to benefit politically from the robust state that the economy had achieved by 1997. They destroyed their economic credentials in 1992 only months after their election victory; that destruction (or self-destruction) kept them at unprecedentedly low levels in the polls from then until now, and it involved something which is mysteriously absent from Clarke's account: namely, Britain's membership in the Exchange Rate Mechanism (ERM).

The ERM was the euro of its day. All the clever people in politics, journalism, academia, the Foreign Office, and the City of London were in favor of going in, and only Mrs. Thatcher with her allegedly stubborn anti-Europeanism stood in the way. It took three years of pressure before Mrs. Thatcher yielded to this consensus of the great and good—only a few weeks before she lost office. Even then she qualified her agreement:

> I insisted that we enter the wide band—6 per cent on either side . . . I made it very clear to John Major [then chancellor of the exchequer] that if sterling came under pressure, I was not going to use massive intervention, either pouring in pounds and cutting interest rates to keep sterling down or raising interest rates to damaging levels and using precious reserves to keep sterling up. For me, willingness to realign within the ERM—as other countries had done—if circumstances warranted it, was the essential condition for entry (*The Downing Street Years*).

Her chancellor, by then her successor as prime minister, did exactly what she had warned against when sterling came under pressure in the ERM in 1992. He poured out billions of dollars in reserves and raised interest rates to a staggering 15 percent in a vain attempt to keep the pound in the ERM. When the pound was forced out (to the great benefit of George Soros among others), the central economic plank of Majorism was destroyed. For Major had fought the 1992 election on the argument that adhering to the discipline of the ERM was the key to Britain's economic recovery, explaining away the deep recession it inflicted on the British economy with the words: "If it isn't hurting, it isn't working." When Britain left the ERM and the British economy promptly outdistanced its continental rivals, this exposed the post-Thatcher Tories as economic incompetents—and worse, as arrogant economic incompetents because they failed to apologize for inflicting unnecessary economic distress on bankrupt firms, mortgage-holders now holding "negative equity", and the unemployed. The Tories never recovered from the public humiliations of "Black Wednesday",

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and hovered around 30 percent in the polls from then until this year's election. William Hague, the new Tory leader, finally recognized political necessity this October and apologized to the British people for the ERM fiasco in his first Tory conference speech.

Indeed, Clarke is altogether the victim of bad timing. Since he wrote his anti-Thatcher philippic, Anthony Seldon's biography of John Major (checked for accuracy by the former Prime Minister) has been published. And it deals a final *coup de grâce* to Clarke's thesis. "Europe", it seems, did damage the Tories, but in exactly the opposite sense to Clarke's. For the biography reveals that the chancellor of the exchequer, Norman Lamont, wanted to leave the ERM on the morning of "Black Wednesday" when speculators attacked. But he was overruled by Major, who "bowed to pressure from the Cabinet's pro-European big beasts, Michael Heseltine, Douglas Hurd and Kenneth Clarke, to go the extra kilometer for the sake of Europe" and raised interest rates to 15 percent (London *Times*, October 9, 1997). That was the first landslip that led eventually to the Labour avalanche—and it was the result not of "Euro-rejectionism" but of Euro-fanaticism.

In short, Clarke's argument is utterly fanciful—so remote from the truth, in fact, that I wondered who he was and where he came from. Was he perhaps the Cambridge Tory historian, well known for his mischievous sense of humor? No, that Jonathan Clark lacks a final "e." Could he be one of those earnest mid-Western Ph.D.s, specializing in British political history, who are understandably confused to discover, late in their theses, that Philip Lloyd-Graeme, Philip Cunliffe-Lister, Viscount Swinton, and the Earl of Swinton are one and the same chap? Apparently not—his mistakes are not trivial ones. Clarke, I am told, is a former British diplomat, late of the Foreign Office. At once, all becomes clear. As an explainer of what has gone wrong with the Tories, Britain, and British policy towards Europe, Clarke is, ahem, flawed. But as an *explanation* he is almost too perfect. □

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Ferdinand Mount:

I DON'T THINK one can quarrel with the main argument that drives Jonathan Clarke's essay. In the later years of her prime ministership, Margaret Thatcher did change from a severe but practical critic of the European Union's arrangements, especially but not exclusively as they applied to Britain, into a crusader against the whole idea, from skepticism in the proper sense of the word to fear and dislike. She would not, I think, have admitted to this change, preferring like most politicians to regard her attitude as one of unwavering consistency, but change there was. It helped to cost her the leadership of her party. And her supporters' rancor at her unseating helped to destroy the party at the polls seven years later.

I agree, too, that it would have been quite possible for her to continue the same robust critique of the European Union's workings in general, and of any excessive cost to Britain in particular, without lurching into such passionate xenophobia and paranoia. Even so, I think the path trod by her and her successor was bound to be stonier than Clarke allows for.

John Major had an overall majority of only twenty-one, with forty or more embittered Europhobes behind him who had nothing much to look forward to except retirement, and who had no particular compunction about destroying the party's election chances. Of course, he could have secured a handsome majority for the Maastricht Bill on Second Reading at any time. In voting on the principle of the Bill, the opposition parties would always be on their best behavior. But in

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Committee, whatever the timing of the Bill, they would lose no opportunity to savage and humiliate the government. That is what oppositions do. The same thing happened to Ted Heath with the original European Communities Bill in October 1971—a majority of 112 on Second Reading, but tiny majorities as low as 4 in the later stages. In 1971, that didn't really matter so much; the party was fresh to office (having been elected in June 1970), the backbench opponents were ill-organized and had little public support. But in the 1990s, for a party which had already been in power so long, it was a poisonous running sore. To neglect the parliamentary arithmetic, as Clarke does, is to ignore the basic reality of British political life.

I also think Clarke is insufficiently skeptical about European Monetary Union in general, and more particularly about its suitability for Britain. EMU does offer real advantages: convenience to travelers and traders, removal of exchange-rate risk within the area and, if well managed, long-term monetary stability with consequent gains for investment and employment.

But it is far from clear that for Britain to join at the outset would be any more sensible than to be first in the queue for the new untested model of a motor car. By staying in the negotiations, Major did not forfeit the advantage Clarke mentions—of having a say in the arrangements—but he did leave Britain complete flexibility about whether or when to join. This stance is widely endorsed in Britain, mostly not for chauvinistic reasons but because our economy is still so different from those of our partners: in its responsiveness to interest rate changes, in our structure of housing finance, in the proportion of our trade that is done in dollars. These questions worry almost everyone in the British political world—Blair and Brown and most City bankers and exporters, especially the smaller ones, no less than Conservative politicians. Wise observers such as Professor Walter Eltis, Niall Fitzgerald of Unilever, and Martin Taylor of Barclays have warned of the dangers of joining when our economies are not properly in sync. Even if the system does not collapse quite soon after being set up, as Alan Greenspan is said to fear, it may impose fierce, politically unacceptable and economically unnecessary costs on the out-of-step members—of which Britain might well be one. This would be a silly sort of self-mutilation in a period when the British economy is relatively more successful than at almost any time since the war.

If the euro is to be a serious and durable currency, rather than a short-lived political gesture, there is much to be said for building it slowly with a membership that is comfortable with the rules and conditions. What's the hurry? □

Ferdinand Mount is editor of the *Times Literary Supplement*.

David Willetts:

JONATHAN CLARKE'S piece reminds me of nothing so much as the outpourings of those extreme Euroskeptics whom he attacks. There is the same obsession with Europe and the comforting search for the one simple, exclusive cause of all our troubles—we are told that if only Conservatives had got the line on Europe right, everything would have been fine.

Clarke has one valid point: the Conservative Party is still coming to terms with the implications of signing the Single European Act in 1985. That was a measure of far greater constitutional significance than the Maastricht Treaty. Conventional nineteenth-century free trade simply meant accepting goods from other countries without tariffs, provided they met our domestic regulatory requirements. The Single Market goes way beyond that in at least three crucial respects.

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First, it does not just cover goods but services, capital, and labor markets. Second, there is mutual recognition. If a Spanish car meets the safety standards, it should be sold in Britain with no further regulatory requirements. An academic qualification from a university in Bologna or Marseille should be valid throughout the European Union. Third, the market is to be policed by a supra-national authority, the European Court of Justice, with the power to intervene where individual nation-states are not complying with the terms of the Single Market. That is undoubtedly a significant move away from the traditional powers and prerogatives of the nation-state. In the decade since the Single Market was ratified Conservatives have experienced the same tensions as American Republicans over NAFTA, but even more acutely.

The greatest significance of "Europe" for Conservatives is ignored by Clarke. The collapse of the Soviet Union ended the old ideological divide between capitalism and communism. Now the crucial intellectual and ideological battle is between two different models of capitalism. One of the most interesting Continental analyses of the battle is Michel Albert's book *Capitalism versus Capitalism* (New York: Four Walls Eight Windows, 1993), while in Britain it is the theme of Will Hutton's appallingly influential *The State We're In* (London: Vintage, 1996). Both books argue that there is a choice for Britain to make between the European social model and what the critics call Anglo-American capitalism. It is a real choice. This battle of ideas is fought out in international institutions such as the IMF, the World Bank, and above all the European Union. The authorities in Brussels explicitly see themselves as pursuing an agenda of creating a European social model. This means heavier regulation of the labor market. It means trade that is made "fair" by eliminating the "unfairness" of "social dumping." It means trying to create a uniform European model of corporate governance. It rests above all on the belief that the market is a bitter pill that can only be swallowed if it is generously sugar-coated with state subsidies.

As every day passes, the evidence mounts that it is the Anglo-American model that yields economic growth, rising prosperity, and more employment, while the European model threatens to bring back the old Euro-sclerosis of the 1970s. One of the things that we Conservatives tried—and sadly failed—to do in the 1997 General Election was to focus the British electorate's attention on this ideological divide. Tony Blair's agenda of signing up to the European Social Chapter, imposing a minimum wage, and placing himself in the tradition of European social democracy threatens much of what Margaret Thatcher and John Major have achieved since 1979. Our view of the world was caricatured as harsh and selfish, whereas Labour instead promised a cozier world of compassion, security, and "partnership." That is the real debate about the direction Britain must take and it is "Europe" that brings it to life. □

David Willetts is a member of the House of Commons.

You Heard It Here First

It's legitimate to take into account a nation's strategic importance when formulating a policy toward it. . . .

—*editorial,* The Washington Post, *August 11, 1997*

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A New Axis

The Emerging Turkish-Israeli Entente

Daniel Pipes

IN SINCAN, a suburb of the Turkish capital of Ankara, a routine event took place on February 2 of this year. The town council sponsored a rally to commemorate "Jerusalem Day" and, as elsewhere in the Middle East, the occasion offered a chance to execrate both Israel and the Arab-Israeli peace process. On a stage featuring a large picture of Fathi Shiqaqi, late leader of the terrorist group Islamic Jihad, politicians, activists, and the guest of honor—Iran's ambassador to Turkey—launched into a predictable and well-received tirade.

In the usual course of events, such a rally would attract little attention; such things happen almost daily some place around the world. In Iran and Sudan, where fundamentalists rule, the central governments themselves sponsor anti-Israel events; in Egypt and Jordan, countries where the state is formally at peace with Israel, the governments avert their eyes and permit such meetings. Even in the United States similar hate fests take place in the ballrooms of major hotels, attended by thousands of sponsors and supporters.

But things did not go as usual in Turkey last February. The next day, a high-ranking military official told a *Hürriyet* reporter, "I followed the meeting in Sincan. I was terrified by what I observed", and a day after that the army sent fifteen tanks, twenty personnel carriers, and an assortment of other military vehicles through the town. Two of those tanks just happened to "malfunction" as the convoy traversed the main road, and had to park for many hours in the very square where the meeting had earlier been held.

Nor did matters end there. The interior minister arrested the town's mayor and dismissed him from office. Charging the mayor (and eleven others) with violating public order and promoting religious hatred, the state prosecutor sought a twelve-year prison sentence for His Honor. The Iranian ambassador was told, "Israel is our friend, you cannot talk like this about it", and was effectively expelled from Turkey—prompting Tehran to respond by expelling the Turkish ambassador.

All this is quite stunning. A town virtually occupied for celebrating Jerusalem Day? A mayor arrested and pushed out of his job for anti-Israel remarks? A diplomatic row over an ambassador's anti-Zionism? In the Middle East in 1997 this could only take place in Turkey, the one Muslim country where a powerful institution completely rejects the demonization of Israel and instead fosters a hard kernel of pro-Israel sentiment. The events in Sincan also point up an extremely significant strategic development: a budding Turkish-Israeli alignment with the potential to alter the strategic map of the Middle East, to reshape American alliances there, and to reduce Israel's regional isolation.

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Ups and Downs

RELATIONS BETWEEN Turkey and Israel go back to March 1949, less than a year after Israel came into existence, when Ankara recognized the Jewish state. Establishing formal ties with Israel sent a strong message about Turkey's international orientation, bringing it close to the West even as it alienated the Arabs; as Gamal Abdel Nasser explained in 1954, "Turkey, because of its Israeli policy, is disliked in the Arab world." But the Turkey-Israel tie at that time was mostly symbolic and, despite efforts to make it substantial, had little content. Relations diminished in the aftermath of the 1973 war, when Turks, bowing to the Arab oil weapon, distanced themselves from Israel. Coolness toward Israel remained for about a decade afterwards, decreasing only as did the Arabs' wealth and clout. Israel and Turkey quietly enhanced intelligence cooperation in the aftermath of Israel's 1982 invasion of Lebanon but formal and public relations remained cool.

The Oslo process that began in the summer of 1993 pleased Ankara very much, and it responded to "the handshake" by finally sending an ambassador to Israel. Soon after, the Turkish foreign minister paid an unprecedented visit to Israel and the two states signed three agreements over the next year dealing with security cooperation, combating terrorism, and (along with the U.S. government) agricultural projects in Central Asia. More high-level visits followed, and in February 1996 Israel established its first-ever formal military link to a predominantly Muslim country when it signed a military training agreement permitting Israeli air force jets to fly in Turkish air space. In March, the two sides initialed a free-trade accord. In all, the two sides signed thirteen accords.

But then, in July 1996, a seemingly fatal blow hit this burgeoning relationship: Necmettin Erbakan, a fundamentalist Muslim who sees Israel roughly as do the leaders in Iran, became Turkey's prime minister. Erbakan talks of Israel as a "timeless enemy" and "a cancer in the heart of the Arab and Muslim world." For him, Israel seeks to undermine the Islamic faith and annihilate the Muslims. He warns of a "Greater Israel" extending from the Nile to the Euphrates and blames a "Zionist conspiracy" for Turkey's economic problems. Erbakan despises Turkish links to Israel and has spoken often about ending them. As Erbakan took office, news commentaries predicted that he would abrogate Turkey's recent agreements with Israel, and were Turkey like other Middle Eastern states, he would no doubt have fulfilled his public promises. Who, after all, would stand up for ties to the Jewish state against a determined assault by the prime minister?

Atatürk's Men

BUT TURKEY is different, and the secularist legacy of Kemal Atatürk, the founder of the Turkish Republic, is perhaps its most distinctive element. Atatürk's thinking owed much to the training he received as an army officer. As he rose through the ranks a century ago, the officer corps stood for secularism and a readiness to learn from the West; Atatürk developed and codified this outlook, then extended it to the country as a whole. Thanks to the force of his will and the prestige he enjoyed as the victorious commander-in-chief who pulled Turkey together after the First World War, Atatürk managed in a brief fifteen-year period (1923-38) to empower a body of modernizing ideas that still has no counterpart elsewhere in the Muslim world. He changed not only many outward Turkish customs, but even the nation's inner mentality. World history has witnessed few such transformations, especially ones carried out so swiftly by a single individual. To an outside observer, this Turkish malleability has a mysterious quality, which the Turks also appreciate. "There is no nation as open to change as we", former Prime Minister Tansu Çiller correctly observed.

Turkey as a whole has retreated from much of Atatürk's legacy over the past six

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decades, but one institution has not: the corps of 35,000 military officers sustains it as a sacred trust. In an impressive continuity of corporate culture, the Turkish top brass has succeeded—through rigorous ideological training and by immediately expelling anyone suspected of disagreement with Atatürk's views—in perpetuating an outlook much at variance from that which prevails in the country at large. Hence it was not particularly surprising that when Erbakan and his Refah (Welfare) Party came to office in July 1996, the Turkish military chose to make Israel one of the most central issues in its broad disagreement with the fundamentalists. It insisted not only on maintaining but even increasing ties to Israel.

In part, both sides see the Jewish state as a symbol: for them, as for the author Milan Kundera, it is the "heart of Europe", in the sense that Israel symbolizes Western civilization. But Israel also relates to practical differences between secularists and fundamentalists, such as those concerning how to deal with Turkey's most pressing domestic problem, an insurgency led by the Worker's Party of Kurdistan (PKK) and supported by neighboring governments. Erbakan would handle the PKK crisis by appeasing the group's sponsors in Damascus, Baghdad, and Tehran. The military would combat the PKK and put pressure on those sponsors, preferably in tandem with Israel.

The military got its way because the constitution gives it a political role, and because the realities of Turkish politics give it an effective veto over the policies of an elected government. Çevik Bir, the dynamic and articulate deputy chief of staff, explains:

> We are acting strictly in accordance with the Turkish Constitution. Article 2 of the Constitution declares that we are a secular country, and Article 4 says that this provision can never be changed. Parliament has given us the responsibility to protect the Turkish mainland and also the Turkish Republic. In the United States or Britain it is not the job of the military to defend the political system, but in Turkey this is a mission given to us by law. We are not dealing with political issues, only carrying out our constitutional responsibility.

Having overthrown governments three times (in 1960, 1971, and 1980), the military retained a credible option to do so again, or at least to exert real pressure on politicians. The generals make their views known through the National Security Council (MGK), a body that formally only advises elected Turkish officials, but which prime ministers defy at their peril. The MGK includes the top five military officers, all secularists, and five civilian officials. Of the latter, four were secularists, which left Erbakan as the only fundamentalist on the Council, and so quite powerless to affect its decisions. Proof resides in Erbakan's forced resignation on June 18, an event widely described inside Turkey and out as a "soft" or "tacit" coup.

Expanding Ties

THANKS IN PART to the Turkish military's role in politics, military ties stand at the heart of the new Turkish-Israeli relationship. These ties have expanded noticeably since the Sincan episode. The Turkish army's Chief of Staff Ismail Hakki Karadayi traveled to Israel in late February 1997, marking the first trip there by a senior Turkish military officer. Karadayi praised the two states' close relations in recent years and commended face-to-face meetings as the best way to make further progress. He got his wish. The to-ing and fro-ing began in earnest when Israel's Foreign Minister David Levy visited Ankara on April 8-9. Turkey's Defense Minister Turhan Tayan visited Israel later that month, and Çevik Bir visited Israel on May 4-6. In October, Israel's Chief of the General Staff Amnon Lipkin-Shahak visited Turkey. In each case, sizable entourages accompanied these figures, so that during the early part of 1997 nearly all ranking flag officers of both militaries met each other. At a lower level, a semi-annual strategic dialogue is

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now in place, and in June, Turkish naval vessels began visiting Israeli ports.

The full results of these intense and high-profile exchanges obviously are not public, but formal announcements and talkative aides indicate that they include five principal areas:

• *Weaponry upgrade.* In the largest of several Israeli-Turkish defense industry deals, worth $632.5 million, Israeli Aircraft Industries is modernizing fifty-four of Turkey's Phantom F-4E aircraft, a Vietnam War-era fighter-bomber. The "Phantom 2000" will have enhanced firepower and maneuverability, as well as better vision and electronics. To clinch the deal Israel granted Turkey a line of credit nearly equal to the entire cost of the modernization. Israel also seeks to upgrade Turkey's aging U.S.-made M-60 tanks.

• *Hardware purchase.* Some weapons (such as Popeye I missiles) both come along with the Phantom improvements and are purchased separately. In addition, Turkey has expressed interest in the Arrow missile defense (partially funded by the United States and still under development), Falcon early-warning aircraft systems, a radar system for detecting plastic and conventional mines, and fences and radars to seal off the Turkish borders with Syria and Iraq (to prevent PKK infiltration). Israel hopes to supply Turkey with 1,000 Merkava Mark IIIs, its main battle tanks, at a cost of about $5 billion. Other reports tell of Turkish interest in Galil infantry rifles, naval patrol aircraft, unmanned air vehicles, and early warning aircraft. In the words of a Turkish analyst, "Basically, the Turkish military is interested in anything Israel has."

• *Joint production.* The two sides have agreed to invest $150 million to produce hundreds of Popeye II missiles and are talking about a project to produce Delilah long-range missiles.

• *Training.* Turkish F-16 pilots and crews learn about electronic warfare in Israel, while Israeli pilots have access to the immense reaches of Anatolia to practice long-range flying over mountainous land (which is very different from flying over water and also serves as a potential preparation for possible missions against Iran). Eight times a year, pilots spend time in the other country. The two sides held joint naval and air maneuvers in the Mediterranean Sea in June 1997, with the ostensible purpose of coordinating search-and-rescue procedures. Not surprisingly, these took place in the international waters close to the Syrian coast. In a particularly dramatic step, Ankara and Jerusalem announced plans for three-way, five-day naval exercises with the United States, dubbed Reliant Mermaid, and originally scheduled to take place in mid-November 1997. The prospect of these exercises so shook other states of the region that they ended up being twice postponed, though who did so in each case and why was not exactly clear.

• *Intelligence sharing.* According to a Turkish newspaper report (denied by Turkey's defense minister), when East Germany went out of business, its Soviet-made weaponry passed to the Federal Republic of Germany, which made three MiG-29 fighter aircraft available to Israel. Israel shared technical information about the MiG-29—Syria's most advanced war plane—with the Turks. It is also widely believed that the Israelis take advantage of their flying in Anatolia, close to Syria, Iraq, and Iran, to gather information about those hostile states.

AS WELL AS the extensive military aspect, the Turkish-Israeli relationship has other dimensions, though none as dynamic or elaborate. These include:

• *Trade.* A Turco-Israeli Free Trade Area Accord was signed in March 1996, resoundingly ratified by both parliaments, and became effective in May 1997. It is expected to foster a fourfold increase in annual trade in just three years, from $450 million to $2 billion. The accord also has possible side benefits for Turkey: Israel has free-trade ties to the United States (and through it to Canada and Mexico), so this might open doors for Turkey in North America.

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• *Transportation*. The two sides are said also to have signed a land transportation agreement that will come into effect only after relations in the region have been "normalized"—that is, when Syria, the land bridge between them, has changed enough to allow trade across its territory. Even without a land passage, there is no lack of transportation between the two countries; last year, some 400,000 Israelis (fully 8 percent of the total population) visited Turkey, where they spent nearly $3 billion. (Equally impressive, Turkish Airlines is the second largest carrier in and out of Tel Aviv, following only Israel's El Al.)

• *Water*. Turkish proposals for a "peace pipeline" and Israeli ideas for a "peace canal" have centered on moving fresh water from Turkey to Israel. None of these plans has come to fruition, however, in large part because the Syrian authorities refuse to let such water traverse their territory. Other means of transporting water, though very expensive, are still under discussion.

• *Religion*. In the first-ever visit of a Turkish religious delegation to Israel in April 1997, the mufti of Istanbul declared that "there can be no Moslem religious objection to the existence of the State of Israel"—not exactly standard fare from muftis.

Other agreements concern everything from figuring out the flight paths of migrating birds (to keep them from flying into jets), to agricultural cooperation, to controlling the trade in kidneys purchased by about fifty Israelis a year in Turkey.

The two governments seem unsure just how to portray this growing cooperation. Sometimes they stress its peaceable content and at other times they flash its sharp edge. Describing joint naval exercises, Çevik Bir of the Turkish general staff stressed only their "humanitarian nature", adding that they "will include search-and-rescue training." In contrast, the Israeli defense minister announced that, "With Turkey, we want real strategic cooperation. . . . Together, and with the support of the U.S., we will demonstrate how a strong combined power can deter against any threat in the region." Turkish and Israeli leaders also contradict themselves on the subject of Syria. Sometimes they insist that their cooperation is not directed against any third party, but other times they drop their guard, as when a Turkish diplomat drew a direct connection between the Syrian export of terrorism and the threat of signing yet more agreements with Israel.

Why the Change?

AS FAR AS the basic Israeli motive is concerned, there has been no essential change; since David Ben-Gurion's time, Jerusalem has always sought better relations with Turkey as a wedge to break the hostile ring of Arabic-speaking neighbors. But why do Turks, bucking a religious tide sweeping the entire Muslim world, seek such a tight bond with Israel? Here the reply divides into two reinforcing parts—general disposition and practical needs.

In the first category, Turks remember past ties to Jews more favorably than those to Arabs. The Turkish minister of defense has declared, for example, "We have had no problems with Israel and the Jewish nation throughout history", something he would not and could not honestly say about Arabs. Most famously, many Jews expelled from Spain in 1492 found refuge in Ottoman lands, and this remains a vivid memory, lavishly celebrated on its 500th anniversary in 1992 and featured prominently in dinner speeches this year when the Turkish chief of staff visited Jerusalem. Turkey and Israel also share what the analyst Alan Makovsky calls "a common sense of otherness" from the non-democratic and Arab regimes that dominate their region. In addition, the Turkish military and the state of Israel share a unique political premise, being the region's most powerful, anti-fundamentalist institutions.

In contrast, Turks have a century's worth of poor relations with Arabs. They resent the fact that Arabs refuse to support their position on Cyprus and find them generally unreliable

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as economic partners. For their part, Arabs frequently blame the Ottoman Empire, which controlled much of the Middle East through four centuries, for their current plight. Exemplifying this attitude, Saddam Hussein declared that, "Whenever non-Arabs assumed leading and advisory roles, as happened during the Ottoman era, Islam faced bitter defeats." This irritates Turks enormously. They lodge official protests when a television series contains anti-Turkish scenes and hold high-level academic conferences on the portrayal of Turks in Arab textbooks. When an Arab government withdraws such materials, the president of Turkey himself expresses satisfaction. For example, after a visit to Amman, President Süleyman Demirel proudly announced that "We removed articles opposing the Ottomans and Turkey from school textbooks in Jordan." The two sides still cherish many crude stereotypes about each other. Turks tend to look down on Arabs as backward and emotional; Arabs return the favor by viewing Turks as rude and dour. Turks tend to dismiss Arabs as too Islamic; Arabs criticize Atatürk's experiment with secularism as a craven attempt to copy the West.

Turkey also has unresolved territorial problems with its two Arab neighbors, both of them long-standing enemies of Israel. In the case of Iraq, Ankara has not entirely given up on its old claims to the Mosul area. In May 1995 President Demirel brought these claims to life again when he announced that "the border is wrong", and called this "a matter that has to be rectified." But the major problem is with Syria, whose government persistently claims an entire Turkish province, Hatay, as its own. Official Syrian maps show Hatay as part of Syria; nightly weather reports on television treat it as just another Syrian province. Troubles with Syria go far beyond land disputes. Damascus claims rights to large flows of Euphrates River waters and has strenuously objected to Turkish waterworks that reduce its take. The regime in Syria seeks to destabilize the Turkish government by supporting a wide range of radical movements, and most especially the PKK, a violent Marxist group whose insurgency has cost over twenty thousand lives in thirteen years.

Turkey shares other interests with Israel. While Greek Cyprus represents a standing problem for Ankara, its welcome for various Palestinian groups has made it also a concern for Jerusalem. As for Iran, since the Islamic Revolution of 1979 its regime has sought simultaneously to destroy Israel and to create an Islamic Republic of Turkey. Bordering on three rogue states, Turkey gains strength working with Israel. Should Hafez al-Assad of Syria, for example, initiate hostilities against Turkey, he would also have to worry about Israel to his south. Turks already see benefits vis-à-vis Greece; as one newspaper analysis put it, the tie to Israel "has rendered ineffective several of the trump cards the Athens government has tried to use against Ankara." For Israel too, the new tie has many advantages in times of war even without direct Turkish participation. As Michael Eisenstadt explains:

> The Turkish army could mass its forces along its borders with Syria. This could tie down Syria's strategic reserve. . . . Turkey could allow damaged Israeli aircraft to land at Turkish air bases and . . . pass on data derived from reconnaissance flights. . . . This could compel Syria to reorganize its air defenses . . . [which] will mean thinning coverage of the center and southwest of the country. At sea, Turkey could allow Israel to operate out of its naval base at Iskenderun or sanctuaries in Turkish waters near Syria, forcing Syria to split its fleet.

This sort of assistance, Eisenstadt concludes, would help Turkey punish Syria, "a troublesome neighbor", and "gain the good will of Israel's political and military leaders, without incurring major risks." Summing up, a Turkish analyst holds that the two states' aims "overlap but are not fully congruent. For Turkey, the agreement is mainly about Syria and the PKK; for Israel, it is more about airspace and Iran." But the ensemble of interests, taken together, works well.

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The new Israeli-Turkish partnership is a great fit internationally as well. Foiled by human rights groups in Europe, and the Greek and Armenian lobbies in the United States, Turkey needs a reliable source of high-technology military equipment; to sustain its military industry, Israel depends on foreign markets for these very products. The Israelis, always the odd man out in their region, are now not so much alone. As for the Turks, always relative strangers in Washington, they now have a well-connected ally of whom they expect a great deal. In the words of a Turkish analyst, "Many Turks believe that friendship with Israel means support from America." Already they declare, "It is up to the Israelis to talk to the [U.S. government]" to win them access to the Arrow anti-missile system. And Ankara relies not just on the Israelis to make its case; it also counts on American Jews such as Morton Abramowitz, Douglas Feith, Harold Rhode, Alan Makovsky, and Richard Perle, and on institutions such as the American Israel Public Affairs Committee and the Jewish Institute for National Security Affairs. And it looks to leading Jewish scholars of Turkey (Avigdor Levy, Bernard Lewis, Stanford Shaw) to soften its rough reputation. "We love American Jews", a foreign ministry official once told me, summing up a widespread sentiment. For Turkey, never quite accepted as Western, the new tie distinguishes it from all other Muslim countries. For Israel, never quite accepted as Middle Eastern, the tie breaches a wall of rejection and may even provide a model for links to other Muslim states.

Responses

WHILE VISITING dignitaries like to emphasize that Turkey and Israel are "the only democracies in the region", their bond is hardly a model of democratic choice. Some Israelis note that the Turkish military, not the elected government, has insisted on the plethora of agreements with Israel, causing concern about their fragility. Turks reply by emphasizing that Erbakan won only one-fifth of the popular vote in the 1995 elections and go out of their way to assure Israel that its secrets are safe with them. "Turkey will not share your military information with others", army Chief of Staff Karadayi told the Israelis, "nor will we pass your military technology to other nations." Addressing the Israeli fear that another anti-Israel government might cancel the accords, President Demirel insisted that "Turkish-Israeli military cooperation, as with cooperation in all other areas, will continue in the future without interruption."

Turkish and Israeli analysts fully appreciate the momentous potential of the new bond. "This budding alliance has altered the strategic power balance in the oil-rich Mideast", writes the eminent Turkish journalist Sami Kohen. Sabri Sayari, a political analyst, calls it the Middle East's "most important military relationship." Moshe Arens, the former Israeli defense minister, deems it "a major change in the geopolitics of the Middle East." The usually glum *Jerusalem Post* brightly sees in it possible vindication for Shimon Peres' unbounded optimism: "There is some truth to the thesis that a new Middle East can emerge."

Most Westerners roundly applaud these developments. The *New York Times* calls it "the most powerful military friendship in the Middle East." *Defense News* describes it as "a brilliant joint move" that "elevates Turkish and Israeli security to practically an unassailable level." To its credit, the Clinton administration has solidly backed its two key allies in the Middle East as they form this partnership. In an unusually blunt statement, a State Department official said, "It has been a strategic objective of the United States that Turkey and Israel ought to enhance their military cooperation and their political relations. . . . If certain other Arab countries don't like that, that's just tough." He also portrayed their rapprochement as "significant" and endorsed it as "helpful to both countries and to the United States."

But the blossoming of Turkish-Israeli relations has caused their many regional

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adversaries much heartache. Complaints have poured in from the governments of Greece, Libya, Lebanon, Syria, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Iraq, and Iran, as well as the Palestinian Authority. One statement after another has depicted Turkey, a Muslim country of 66 million, as being subjugated to a Zionist or imperialist conspiracy. The complaints have also revealed what each party most fears. Syria's Foreign Minister Faruq ash-Shar'a accused Turkey and Israel of forming a "military alliance." The Libyan news agency worried about a "suspicious military alliance" that would steal Arab "petroleum riches and water resources." The Iranians specifically worried about Israelis now being able to target their nuclear facilities. Fundamentalist Muslims see it as directed against all those Muslim states to which the label "rogue" is attached in the United States. "It's dangerous because the Jews want to extend their reach to other Muslim nations like Iraq, Iran, and Syria", said Mustafa Mashur, the head of Egypt's Muslim Brethren. The PKK has derisively compared the Turkish chief of staff variously to "an Israeli civil servant" and to "a child." Of course, some Turks have echoed these complaints, but the authorities rebuff them all as infantile.

IF IT CONTINUES on its present trajectory, the Turkish-Israeli tie could well alter the strategic map of the Middle East. But is it more likely to stabilize or to disrupt the region?

Initially, it could lead to more problems. Symbolic of the violence to come, Palestinians threw a Molotov cocktail into the front yard of the Turkish consulate in eastern Jerusalem in early May, then poured a flammable liquid on the consul general's car. Egypt's foreign minister has threatened the formation of a military counteralliance. News reports indicate that Assad's son, Bashshar, met with the Hizballah leader Hasan Nasrallah, and "the two men decided to attack Turkish targets." The recent opening of the Syrian-Iraqi border after seventeen years of closure results directly from the two old Ba'athi lions, Assad and Saddam Hussein, recognizing that they face a common, threatening coalition.

In the longer term, however, strong Turkish-Israeli ties will enhance the region's stability by serving as a powerful military deterrent against would-be enemies. Aggressive states must watch their step in the face of a formidable combination of the Middle East's largest military force and its most advanced, and this diminishes the likelihood of war. It may already be working: An Arab newspaper reports that Syria has decided against a strategic alliance with Iran, fearing that this might "lead to increased coordination between Ankara and Tel Aviv against Damascus" and to its own further isolation.

The Turkish-Israeli partnership offers many advantages to the United States. Most ambitiously, it could provide the nucleus of an American-oriented regional partnership made up of democratic allies—as opposed to the authoritarian rulers upon which Washington has relied for five decades. Eisenhower's Baghdad Pact, Nixon's "twin pillars", and Reagan's "strategic consensus" all depended on dubious monarchs (Iraq's weak Hashemites, Iran's bombastic shah, the egregious Saudis) and ugly authoritarians (such as the Mubarak regime in Egypt today). But the Turkish-Israeli alignment creates, for the first time, the possibility of developing an alliance of pro-American and democratically oriented states, such as exists in Europe. If cultivated carefully, Jordan might join in, with more states (perhaps Kuwait) adhering later. The final result could be that most elusive of all goals: a more peaceable Middle East. □

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Albania's Cappuccino Coup

Johnathan Sunley

'Oh, I know all about the Albanians', cried a lady; 'they are those funny people with pink eyes and white hair.' But the Albanian is not so quickly explainable; and of all the Balkan peoples he is least known to the English.

—Edith Durham in *The Burden of the Balkans*

TWO PEOPLE ONLY glancingly familiar with it, Albania is the country that put the a's into Ruritania. With its all-too-familiar pretensions to antiquity, a language that appears to have remembered its p's and q's but not many other letters, and an interwar ruler—King Zog—who can be considered the last word in eccentric, self-styled (and in his case self-appointed) Balkan monarchs, it is perhaps understandable that even educated audiences tend to think of Albanians in terms of the outlandishly dressed impostors in Mozart's *Cosi fan Tutte*.

Having to live down such a reputation has not helped Albania to be taken seriously during the political crisis that has swept over it this past year. Most reports have stuck to variations on the following formula: impoverished people (divided into two main irreconcilable tribes) become even more impoverished as a result of ruler's fecklessness, and revert to ancient custom of shooting wildly at anything that moves until both tribes are pacified by an outside force as bewildered as everyone else. Throw in a few references to the country's bizarre communist-era dictator, Enver Hoxha, its half million concrete bunkers that look like a set from a 1950s science fiction film, plus (as a particularly exotic touch) a group of lifelong virgins in the north who dress and behave like men, and you have the makings of a hilarious 5-minute or 500-word "Letter from Tirana."

Unfortunately for Western interests in this region, not to mention those of the Albanians themselves, some rather more serious-minded people have taken advantage of this approach to advance an agenda that is far from amusing. The Albanian ex-communists' victory in the June 1997 election, applauded by their fellow-traveling friends in the West on the one hand and actively assisted by their not-so-naive in-country allies on the other, represents a startling success for a coalition of interests that is sure to gain strength and momentum from this coup. Today, Albania; tomorrow, other European countries sleepwalking their way to self-destruction.

Democracy Derailed?

THE STORY starts in May 1996. Visiting the country for the first time in five years, there was little doubt in my mind that the Democratic Party (DP), the anti-communist movement that had taken office in 1992 following the final collapse of the one-party system, would be returned to

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power in that month's elections. The reason was general prosperity.

Back in 1991, Albania looked like a land suffering the effects of a nuclear winter. People wearing charity handouts stood around abjectly, waiting for something to do. A shop was an iron grill in a wall, through which something might occasionally be shoved, and utilities barely functioned. By the spring of 1996, by contrast, Albania had the appearance of an energetically developing country trying to yank itself out of poverty and desperation by its own bootstraps: on the make, yes, but still definitely on the up. The capital, Tirana, was a chaotic, round-the-clock building site, choking with traffic. Businesses, shops, hotels, and cafés had sprung up, and there was no mistaking the restored dignity and morale in a people whose existence under communism had been close to serfdom.

Though the DP could not take all the credit for this transformation, it had certainly done more for the country than the opposition Socialist Party (SP), the leader of which—Fatos Nano—was still in prison, having been convicted of misappropriating aid from Italy during a spell as premier in the twilight years of the communist system. Polls showed the Democrats headed for victory and this was obviously also the assumption of the Socialists, who responded to early returns on election day that confirmed their unpopularity by walking out of polling stations and refusing to recognize the result.

The Socialist Party's allegations of intimidation and fraud were vague and not very convincing to observers of other elections in the former Eastern Bloc who had witnessed genuine examples of multiple-voting and count-rigging. They *were* enough, however, for the body charged with verifying the outcome, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe's Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (giving the horrendous acronym OSCE-ODIHR). Its debriefing session the next day was dominated by a sequence of earnest Scandinavians taking the floor to remonstrate about the "atmosphere of coercion" they claimed to have sensed. One British observer (now a Liberal Democrat MP) went further, telling the *Daily Telegraph*, "In no other country have I seen the ruling party using the machinery of state and police like I saw here."

While such a statement probably says more about this individual's limited experience (and grammar) than anything else, there was a less innocent explanation for the vehement protestations of other OSCE-accredited observers. A letter sent before the election by the Norwegian Labor Party's youth organization, on behalf of nine of these election-watchers, asked the Socialists for assistance in the form of transport and interpreters for "the comrades who are coming." This request gave the SP a perfect opportunity to organize for the sake of their impressionable young Scandinavian friends the kinds of violent incidents mysteriously unrecorded by anyone else. Once picked up and recycled by the international media, reports of these staged clashes then provided the SP with the excuse they needed for pulling out of the election and rejecting the legitimacy of the newly elected parliament.

In fact, the DP won a modest 56 percent of the vote, down from their 62 percent four years earlier. The Albanian electoral system being predominantly first-past-the-post, this gave them 87 percent of seats in parliament—a figure deliberately confused with the party's share of the vote by commentators keen to assert a blatant cooking of the books (for example, Alex Standish's "Albanian Adventures" in the Summer issue of *The Salisbury Review*).

The DP's real misjudgment at this stage came when the interior minister banned the Socialists from holding a protest rally in Tirana's main square. In full view of the Western journalists and observers gathered for their usual pre-lunch drinks on the terrace of the Tirana International Hotel, police dispersed a few hundred demonstrators using batons and tear gas. More than the appalling brutality of the communist system itself, more than its legacy of deprivation and fear, *this*

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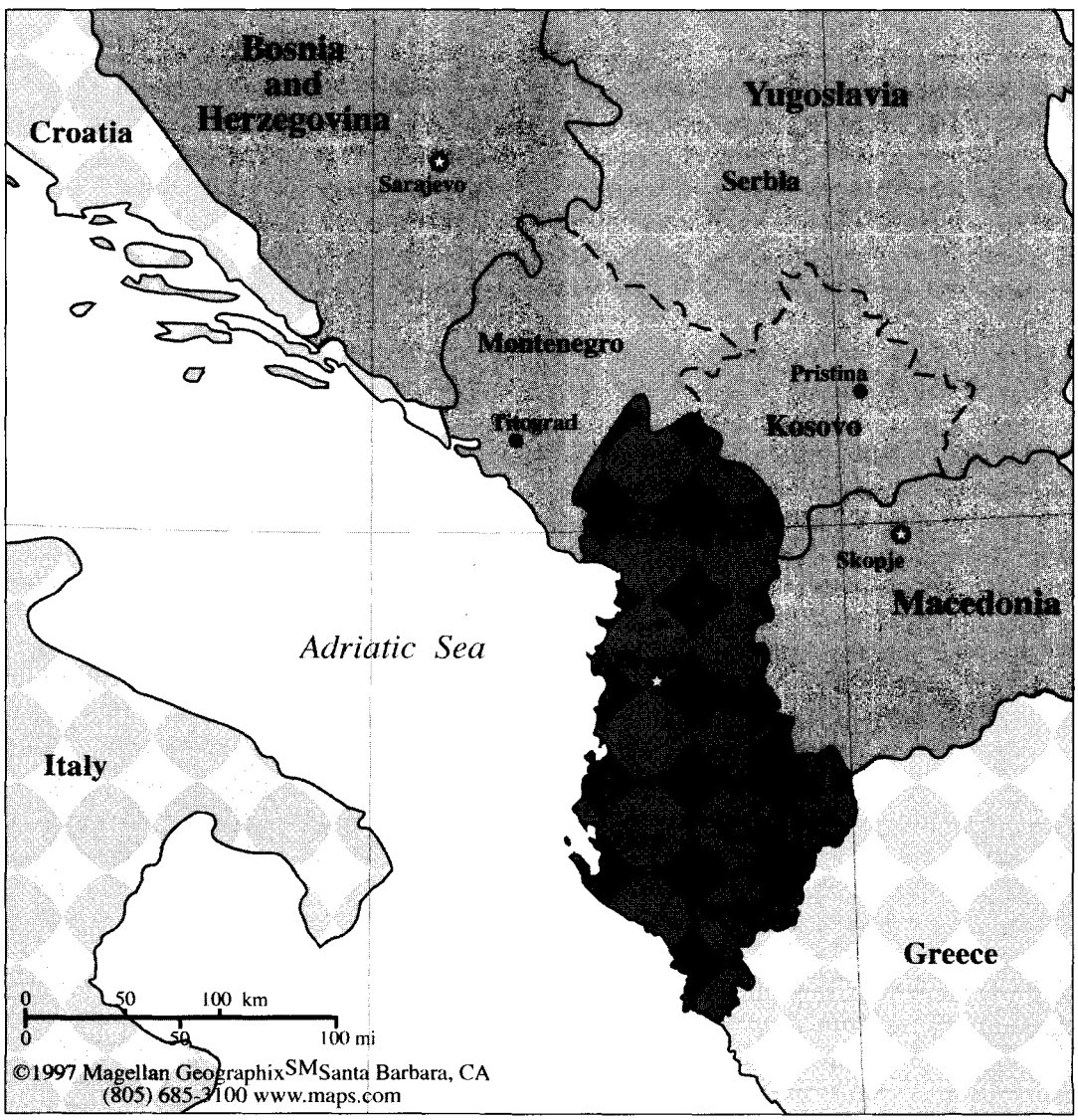
turned the stomach of an "international community" worried about missing their flights home, and thus destroyed the DP's reputation in their eyes once and for all.

A Dutch observer caught in the melee (who had obviously lived a sheltered existence in his own country) told the *New York Times*, "I have never seen the totalitarian face like this, people being beaten, cameras taken." "Democracy Betrayed in Albania", shrilled the headline in the next day's issue of London's *Independent*, while the *Guardian* expostulated, "Albania Faces New Tyranny." Increasingly, these media attacks concentrated on the country's president, Sali Berisha, the tone being set by an article in that week's *Observer*, titled "Dictator's Shadow Stalks Albania", which made one of the first direct comparisons between him and the late and unlamented Enver Hoxha. Sabit Brokaj, for example, who one year later was to turn up as the main coordinator of anti-DP rebel activity in the south of the country, confided to the *Observer*, "Berisha was a fanatical Communist who was very close to the Hoxha family. Like Enver, he is a true dictator."

As one of the country's foremost cardiologists, Berisha had indeed been a member of



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the communist Albania Party of Labor. But no evidence has surfaced (say, in the form of rousing speeches to, or strong denunciations of, fellow doctors) that he saw this as more than a means to practicing his profession. Hoxha's widow continues to deny that Berisha treated her husband more than a couple of times. Her contempt for Berisha is even more revealing when set beside her admiration for his main political opponent and now usurper, Fatos Nano. The latter was one of her favorites at the Marxist-Leninist Institute in Tirana, from where even in the late 1980s he was criticizing Mikhail Gorbachev for "negative deviationism."

WHILE IT WOULD be unreasonable to expect every stringer in search of a Tirana dateline to have an exhaustive knowledge of the communist period in Albania, the lamentable ignorance of nearly all journalists who have covered this crisis made them easy game for local "intellectuals" bent on manipulating them for their own ends. Take Fatos Lubonja, for example. Lubonja's punchy sound-bytes condemning Berisha have been a staple of Western media reports, and his Trotskyite explanation of recent events, entitled "Pyramids of Slime", can be found in the June issue of *Transitions* (published in Prague by the Open Media Research Institute). From the perspective of his Western interlocutors, what gives Lubonja his authority—apart from his excellent English and agreeably disheveled appearance—is the fact that he spent seventeen years in communist prisons. But what these reporters fail to mention is the reason for the punishment meted out to his family: namely, his father's prominent position for many years in the communist hierarchy as general director of Albanian Radio and Television. Unlike those jailed or murdered for resisting communism, the Lubonja family (like many others) fell victim to one of Hoxha's periodic intra-party purges.

Across Central and Eastern Europe today, it is striking how many sons of those purged in this manner—one thinks of Jan Kavan in the Czech Republic, or Laszlo Rajk in Hungary—are at the forefront of the liberal intelligentsia's opposition to anything remotely national or traditional. Scratch a little deeper, however, and you will often find these sons trying to overcompensate for their fathers' failings in the eyes of the old system by taking a doctrinaire and extreme line. Indeed, following forty minutes worth of statutory political correctness, Lubonja told me that he found Hoxha's supporters more sympathetic than Berisha's because the former had been "idealists."

An even more extreme example of this phenomenon is the Albanian Helsinki Committee, another sure stopping-off point for outsiders trying to find their bearings. The chairman of this organization, Professor Arben Puto, was not always a human rights campaigner. For four decades he was one of the Hoxha regime's favored academics, his publishing record perhaps helped by the marriage of two of his sisters to members of the Politburo. Unlike the heavily persecuted Helsinki committees of the communist period (one never existed in Albania), Professor Puto's NGO is handsomely funded. Last year, for example, it was a "partner organization" in a project aimed at "strengthening and developing three sectors of civil society", supported by the EU's Phare Democracy Programme to the tune of ECU 147,000. It also received $30,000 from the U.S. Agency for International Development. In addition, the committee is part of the worldwide network of Helsinki groups, many of which—despite their proudly flaunted non-governmental credentials—are subsidized by Western taxpayers.

Yet for all their resources, the work of these much-cited bodies is usually as sloppy as it is politically biased. Shortly after the May 1996 election, the jewel in the crown of this network, the New York-based Human Rights Watch/Helsinki, issued a damning report under the title "Democracy Derailed." A close reading of this study shows that none

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of the violations it mentions was observed by its authors first-hand; all were based either on press cuttings or telephone conversations with members of the compromised OSCE-ODIHR monitoring mission.

Investing in Pyramids

BY THE AUTUMN of 1996, nearly all elite domestic and international opinion was turned against the Democratic Party. But, for good reason, it continued to enjoy the confidence of the Albanian people, and when the DP won the October local elections with its usual 50 percent plus share of the vote, it began to look as though noisy agitation alone might not topple Berisha—especially as even the U.S. State Department, having backtracked on its initially "free and fair" verdict on the general election, was forced to concede that it could find no major faults in the municipal level balloting. Something more was needed.

A clue to what might be in the offing came from jailed Nano himself, during a meeting in the summer with a visiting British human rights activist. Looking quite at home amid the luxuries—including a mini-bar and stereo-television—of his well-equipped cell (the conditions of which he described to those not prepared to undertake the journey to Tepelenë as "terrible"), the Socialist Party leader predicted that pyramids, not elections, would bring Berisha down. He was referring to the pyramid investment schemes that had become a striking feature of the Albanian scene and, in an odd way, he turned out to be right.

So much nonsense has been written about these high-risk schemes into which, for want of a proper banking system, up to two-thirds of Albanians deposited money, that it is difficult to know where to begin in setting matters aright. Perhaps with simple arithmetic; after all, it should have struck even journalists as strange that a country they always referred to disparagingly as the poorest in Europe (average monthly wage about $2) should suddenly become full of people who supposedly lost tens of thousands of dollars in "life savings." The numbers didn't even begin to add up. The most charitable explanation for this misunderstanding is the genuine confusion in the minds of many Albanians between capital and income. My interpreter claimed to have lost $2,500. But for eighteen months he had been receiving an 8 percent monthly return on his original $15,000 investment. Thus despite being unable to retrieve $2,500, he had still reaped a total profit of $19,100. Some loss.

This is not to deny that many—though by no means all—of the alleged pyramid schemes were just that, meaning that depositors' profits depended on the unceasing arrival of new investors. Obviously, then, those who joined shortly before the bubble burst in January had no chance to collect anything. What is not obvious is why the schemes that did fail collapsed when they did.

Several had been operating for two to three years, and one reason why their existence was not criticized earlier was a banking law adopted by the Albanian parliament in 1994, which—on IMF advice—contained no provision that the National Bank of Albania act as a supervisor of commercial banks, or of any money lending enterprise. The IMF changed its tune two years later, after the consequences of its misjudgment had become obvious. Yet the collapse might never have occurred if companies like Vefa Holdings (still going today, incidentally), which provided attractive but not absurd rates of interest, had not been joined in late 1996 by schemes offering an obviously crazy and unsustainable 60 percent per month.

Two of the most famous for their generous returns on investment were the Populli and Xhaferri foundations, the former run by an opposition politician, the latter by a colorful sharpster who started calling himself the "general", after deciding that the title "general director" was too common. (Though the U.S. Embassy in Tirana denied evacuating these two interesting characters during the height of the crisis in March, both are now resident in America, from where they some-

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times give interviews to the newspaper *Koha Jone*. In the autumn of 1996, it was that same paper—whose closeness to the Socialists may be gauged from the fact that its editor ran for parliament in June with SP backing—that ran large advertisements encouraging readers to take advantage of these handsome interest rates.) When at the start of 1997 these two funds declared their bankruptcy, Berisha's administration moved smartly to freeze their remaining assets and work out a plan for repaying creditors up to half of their deposits. There were protests and demonstrations, but the situation would never have spun out of control had it not been for the collapse of a third notorious fund called Gjallica.

Unlike other pyramid schemes, Gjallica was based in the southern port of Vlorë, which for a time during the communist period enjoyed a certain status (and relative prosperity) as a submarine base leased to the Soviet Union. Since 1991, Vlorë had again begun thriving, this time as an entrepôt for the trafficking of drugs, arms, and migrants over the Adriatic to Italy, a mere 40 kilometers away. As a result of these activities, a powerful local mafia had emerged, which gave this frontier town the sleazy, threatening air common to self-declared free-trade zones that take full advantage of the make-your-own-rules commercial culture of post-communism—as in, for example, Tiraspol' in Moldova, Mostar in Bosnia-Herzegovina, and the Hungarian town of Szeged. Responding to international complaints, Berisha tried in late 1996 to clamp down on this illegal trade by impounding over one hundred high-powered speedboats. Naturally this was not good news for Gjallica, for those boats provided the means by which many of the profits from the town's lucrative business dealings were recycled and laundered. It seemed perverse, though, of the demonstrators who took to the streets in February to blame the government for the firm's bankruptcy, when what probably precipitated its collapse was a check for $550,000 paid by Gjallica on January 7 to the Socialist Party. Nano's prediction, it seems, was really less a prediction than a statement of intent.

These same demonstrators would never have succeeded in overpowering the forces of law and order in Vlorë—especially if one were to believe in the existence of the kind of vicious police state that Berisha had allegedly built up—if they had not been armed and organized by a combination of local mafiosi smarting at their financial losses, and former members of the communist-era secret police (Sigurimi) who saw their chance to take revenge on the new system. Typical of the latter was Albert Shyti, who returned from Greece with an impressive private arsenal and set himself up as the head of the Vlorë "Committee of Public Salvation"—an example imitated in several other towns and cities in the south.

In Tirana, meanwhile, the Socialists, who still refused to take their seats in parliament, sought advantage by politicizing the protesters' demands, which migrated quickly from "We want our money back" to "Berisha must go." While key Socialist members maintained contact with the rebel committees in the south, Nano orchestrated an alliance with smaller parties and groups of dissatisfied intellectuals in an attempt to persuade the world that he led a broad-based popular uprising against a brutal tyranny. This strategy worked like a charm. A Forum for Democracy, composed of the SP and its hirelings but titularly led—in a stroke of genius—by the head of the Association for Former Victims of Political Persecution, announced its formation and demanded new elections. Representatives of this forum positioned themselves in the coffee shop of Tirana's only five-star hotel, the Rogner Park, and made themselves available for interviews with Western journalists and human rights activists overjoyed to find the "We are the people" spirit of 1989 burning brightly again before their very eyes.

If that earlier year had been one of "velvet revolutions", the events of the first half of 1997 in Albania amounted to a "cappuccino coup." Even as experienced a hand as John Simpson, the foreign affairs editor of the BBC, seemed not

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to find it odd that, as he wrote in the *Sunday Telegraph*, the "lobby of our hotel [is] the center of all political activity." Here it was, over cups of steaming coffee and small glasses of *raki*, that rumors swirled about the mounting depravities and growing desperation of the regime. Berisha had looted the national museum in Tirana to gather presents for British ministers—so claimed *The Independent*. State television was inciting viewers to lynch Albanian journalists it deemed disloyal—so reported the Associated Press. Berisha was planning to impose a "reign of unprecedented terror on the south"—thus the *Daily Telegraph*. Deserted by his henchmen, Berisha had taken to stumbling around his presidential palace muttering about betrayal—according to the *New York Times*. Berisha was "mentally unstable"—so opined the influential London-based *bien pensant* monthly *War Report*.

Although the competition was stiff, first prize for disinformation undoubtedly goes to *The Independent*, a left-of-center British daily (home to several columnists from the folded *Marxism Today*) that in February 1997 took the puzzling decision to try to revive its falling circulation by running articles on Berisha's "gangster state" as its lead front-page story on two consecutive days. Not a shred of evidence was offered to substantiate its allegations about the Albanian government's "complicity and involvement in drug-smuggling, gun-running, sanctions-busting and money-laundering", all of which was breezily attributed to unspecified "intelligence sources." The stories had the desired effect, however, of shaming the British Foreign Office into disavowing any form of assistance to a legally elected government. (When, several weeks later, support through another EU program was given instead to the country's anti-Berisha intelligentsia, the recipients logically enough decided to name the paper they were able to establish with this aid *Indipendent*.)

What was odd about all this was that, thanks to the BBC and other news organizations, Western viewers could see for themselves that this supposedly ruthless dictatorship was having a surprising amount of difficulty putting down an uprising led by Kalashnikov-touting youths performing for the cameras in imitation Rambo-wear. In March, attempts to use the army to halt the rebels' progress northward failed, and the "people" seized large quantities of armaments from depots deserted by fleeing soldiers. From this point on, the success of the ex-communist coup d'état was assured.

The Communists Redux

JUST HOW AND WHY the Albanian army collapsed so rapidly, having scarcely fired a bullet in self-defense, is one of the main mysteries of this whole affair. Throughout the wars in the former Yugoslavia (1991-95), Albania had played a key role in U.S. strategy toward the region, even serving as a base for reconnaissance flights over the territory to its north. Its forces had participated in several joint exercises with those of existing member countries within the apprenticeship framework of the Partnership for Peace.

It now looks as though the training and advice tendered over those years was less valuable than it seemed at the time. Under Hoxha, Albania had been extraordinarily militarized. Cutting the army's divisions from 27 to 5 helped restore the country's civil-military balance, but it also created a pool of 20,000 disaffected ex-officers, many of whom later put their expertise at the service of the southern "public salvation committees." This problem was exacerbated by the fact that senior officers sacked from the army for being linked to the former regime were replaced—apparently on the advice of one of the American military experts seconded to the Albanian Ministry of Defense—by deputies who had previously functioned as commissars for ideological integrity. The net result of these "reforms" was evident in March, as one group of ex-communist officers surrendered without a fight to another. The author of these changes, Minister of Defense Safet Zhulali, decided to flee Albania a few days later. His subsequent return to the country after the

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Socialists formed their new government has done nothing to allay suspicions that he had been their "Trojan horse" at this key ministry.

With the army's collapse, Berisha's only option was to appeal to the West for help in quelling the revolt. Alarmed by the fresh waves of refugees turning up on its shores (and also by the resumption of smuggling activity around Vlorë), the Italian government might have been prepared to give it. The rotating presidency of the EU, however, rested in the hands of the Netherlands, and it was the Dutch foreign minister who became the first in an unending procession of time-wasting European dignitaries to descend on Tirana to urge peace and negotiations. Proudly unveiling at the end of his first such foray a "process of non-violence, a process of double-track political dialogue", Hans van Mierlo told reporters that the crisis in Albania—one brought about by a group of terrorists, bear in mind—reflected "a lack of confidence by the people in the system."

Still, it was the call for fresh elections by the previously cautious U.S. government that raised the hopes of the Socialists and their armed proxies to a new level, and thus effectively ensured the elected government's downfall. In Washington, State Department Spokesman Nicholas Burns maintained on March 13 of this year, "We don't make decisions about who comes and goes in Albanian politics. Albanians produce those decisions." Yet on *that same day* he claimed, "We've put enormous pressure on President Berisha to form this broad-based coalition government, to come out of his political shell and to reach out to the opposition." For good measure, Burns later said that "all Albanians need to support their government", meaning the cross-party administration agreed upon that month to run the country until new elections. This was a far cry from his attitude toward its predecessor, whose difficulties, he once explained, had resulted from "a broad-scale social revolution of frustration and anger and outrage because of the pyramid schemes."

In the run-up to the June election, Albania was saturated with Western watchdog bodies and their local affiliates preaching the values of "Toleration, Understanding, Transparence" (to quote the slogan of the high-profile Tirana NGO, the Society for Democratic Culture). Leaving nothing to chance, the British anti-censorship organization, Article 19, even set up a human rights hotline, which received barely a handful of calls from a population burdened by rather greater problems than "the right to non-interference with professional materials, including cameras, phones and notebooks." It is hard to say on any given day whether naivety or cynicism got the better of such groups. As early as April it was clear where the balance of power in the country lay, and there was no need for these organizations even to simulate an interest in upholding equal standards. As the director of the local Soros Foundation office was heard to say, "Berisha's going, we've finally got him, Berisha's going."

Indeed, so fast had the Albanian authorities lost control over the country that a new myth had to be rushed into circulation to cloud reality. This was the hour of the Balkan "experts", who told us how they had long foreseen this civil war between the Gheg tribe of the north and the Tosks in the south. Asked on CNN in March whether "we are seeing a potential Bosnian situation here", British expert Misha Glenny—who has practically made a living from predicting "potential Bosnian situations" throughout southeastern Europe—responded in the affirmative, adding enigmatically, "And there's a tremendous resonance in all aspects of life in the north and the south." So strong and well documented is this "resonance" that in its briefing materials for observers of this year's election, the OSCE could not resist reminding readers that Ghegs live in the south of Albania and Tosks in the north [sic].

The mere mention of Bosnia was enough to scotch plans for a proper intervention force that might have neutralized the country's armed gangs and created the conditions necessary for the holding of fair elections. As in

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Bosnia, at least until recently, the thousands of extremely well-equipped and well-trained Western troops desisted from disarming anyone, and spent most of the time guarding their own exit strategy. The 7,000 Western troops that arrived in Albania in April to guarantee supplies of food and medicine (neither of which were in especially short supply) did little else. Four months later, the last detachment of this Italian-led "multinational protection force" left, having fired barely a few rounds in anger. As in Bosnia, these well-equipped and well-trained soldiers avoided all forms of confrontation with the feebly armed gangs holding the country to ransom. And as in Bosnia, it was the OSCE that was charged with supervising elections, despite having come up with a 107 percent voter turnout in Bosnia.

But as in Bosnia, the aim of the international community was to hold elections as soon as possible and then not to hang around to face the consequences. Boxed into a corner, the DP, which had won two elections in twelve months, drew comfort from a multi-party agreement signed in early May, according to which the "public salvation committees" would be dissolved forty-five days before voting. In the event, this happened only in Korçë, where both seats were won by a right-wing alliance. Across the rest of the south, Mao's maxim about power issuing from the barrel of a gun held for the entire campaign period, allowing gang leaders like Shyti to run virtually unopposed as candidates for parties that now have a place in the new government.

Nowhere was this coalescence between the Socialists (and their allies) and the rebels more graphically displayed than in the small town of Cërrik, not far from the monumental "Steel of the Party" metallurgical complex at Elbasan. When President Berisha attempted to hold a meeting there, five policemen were shot dead. Afterwards, a roadblock was set up on the edge of the town, protected by a machine gun draped in the Socialist Party flag. Next to the machine gun hung a poster of Hoxha. The day before voting, the one DP supporter brave enough to keep an eye on the work of the electoral commission there complained to me that the OSCE had not been to the town once. While he talked, I watched as an election official signed passes for SP observers, losing count around thirty-five. There were none for the DP. Cërrik was eventually "won" by the secretary-general of the SP, Rrexhep Meidani, who has since been chosen to become Albania's new president.

Voting day itself was even more of a farce, as the OSCE's observers fanned out across the country advertising their presence far in advance by their customized yellow hats and sweatshirts. Afterwards, they congratulated themselves on the fact that only one person (affiliated with the DP) was actually killed during voting. It seems not to have occurred to them that this was *one more* killed than in May 1996, when they had so roundly condemned the "atmosphere of coercion" surrounding that election. Nor, of course, did they note that some 1,500 people had been killed in the half year preceding the election, or ask themselves what impact this might have had on potential DP voters.

But the OSCE's biggest stroke of hypocrisy came a few days after the voting, when followers of King Zog's son, Leka, pretender to the Albanian throne, filled Tirana's main square to protest the contradictory results being issued by the Central Electoral Commission concerning the referendum on restoring the monarchy. One royalist was killed and five wounded as special police units, acting under the orders of the SP, "defended" the building from which the commission members made announcements concerning public opinion (they had just implausibly declared that Leka's level of popular support had plummeted from over 50 to around 30 percent in a 48-hour period).

None of this troubled the OSCE, which rushed out a preliminary report calling the elections "adequate and acceptable", and packed away its Election Observation Handbook for some other East European trouble spot. The Albanian Helsinki Committee and its Western backers issued

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their own statement, in which they observed that the results "reflect the political will of the Albanian electorate." Messages of congratulation for Fatos Nano (pictured in the *Financial Times* as "a portly, affable man who likes to crack jokes") flowed in from the vice-chairman of the European Parliament and the leader of the German Social Democratic Party, which no doubt encouraged him in his immediate assaults upon the country's constitution. The domestic media began urging the Socialists to put Berisha on trial.

THOUGH SUCH a trial has not yet come to pass, the ex-communists have been quick to make up for five years of lost time in other ways. State-owned radio and television, the civil service, the judiciary, and the police have all been purged and packed with Socialist Party placemen. The minister of defense, Sabit Brokaj, has sacked scores of senior officers, threatening some with prosecution for "declaring war on the south of the country" and others for disobeying orders to do same. For all these efforts, however, the Ministry of Interior reported in early October that it had collected only 25,000 of the estimated 600,000 weapons believed to be missing from army depots.

Still, the West has secured the change it so badly wanted in Albania and will have no second thoughts about the new regime now. (As though to prove—or parody—Western support for this government, in October the CIA began dispatching personnel to train its revamped secret police.) As Prime Minister Nano said on returning from the IMF-World Bank meeting in Hong Kong with the promise of $120 million in fresh loans, "There's no time to waste now on ideological disputes." This attitude was evidently shared by the member of parliament from his party who five days earlier pulled out a gun on the floor of parliament and shot Azem Hajdari, one of the Democratic Party's most popular leaders. Opposition rallies to protest this incident were banned, while the state news agency framed the issue for the Western media by portraying the shooting as a typical act of revenge—the kind of thing the country's proud northern clansmen do all the time. How the ghost of Enver Hoxha must be smirking.

For the Western policymakers and commentators who have connived in these tragic events, however, there may soon come news to take the smiles off their faces. Since September, Albanian students in the neighboring Yugoslav province of Kosovo have been holding protests against the forced subjection in which the two million Albanians living there are held by the tiny Serb minority. Tirana's new line has been not to do anything that might raise the hopes of their ethnic brethren there. To Albania's east, by contrast, the new government has been busily interceding in the much lower-level ongoing dispute between the Albanian minority and the Macedonian authorities. Partly as a result, these tensions have now increased to the point where serious conflict in Macedonia—a country still patrolled by U.S. forces (in the form of the U.N. Preventive Deployment Force)—can no longer be ruled out.

The dynamics and outcome of that struggle might well make Macedonia even more dependent on the rump Yugoslavia than it has been until now, in which case the Albanians would find themselves in an even worse position. If that is the unspoken aim of their mother country's aggressive new stance toward Macedonia, then this would be the first time in half a century that a convergence of interest has existed between Tirana and Belgrade. □

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Europe's Underclass

Cait Murphy

THE THEORIES OF Le Corbusier have much to answer for. The once fashionable French architect believed in vertical cities that echoed the dehumanized life of the modern world: "We must create", he wrote, "the mass production spirit." In the city of his dreams, people would live in huge slabs of high-rise housing. To see how this has worked out in practice, take a twenty minute train ride from central Paris to the most complete embodiment of his ideas: La Courneuve, a vertical city *par excellence*. Some thirty years after its much ballyhooed construction as the best exemplar of modern urban life, the place is a mess. The high-rises are shabby, the limited park space ill-maintained. Most of the shops are boarded up, graffiti the only decoration. The train station is a fair walk away, and the bus service limited.

It is, in short, an excellent example of the problems of what France knows as *la périphérie*. While America's blight tends to be concentrated in the core of its central cities, in Paris and other French cities the problem is generally in the inner ring of suburbs, most of them built, with the highest of hopes, from the late 1950s to the early 1970s. If ever one wants to see how good intentions can pave the road toward a kind of living purgatory, La Courneuve and its many architectural clones are prime exhibits.

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That said, they are not as awful as, say, the urban hells of Chicago's Robert Taylor Homes, or vast swathes of Detroit, New York, St. Louis, Baltimore, Washington, and Los Angeles. For one thing, crack cocaine—the moral equivalent of a bomb on already fragile neighborhood infrastructures—has not hit Europe as hard as it has American cities. For another, guns and random violence are less common. In the 1995 French movie, *La Haine* (*Hate*), which had *tout* Paris shivering in horror, the central drama depicts how one young white Frenchman acquires a gun. In some of America's urban public schools, by contrast, metal detectors are as much standard equipment as desks. As well, all the people in La Courneuve have access to health care. And finally, although the rise of explicitly racist political parties like the National Front is troubling, and while non-white Europeans have worse social and economic profiles, race is less poisonous an issue in the discussion of urban blight. It is to some extent possible for white America to avoid inner cities and to consider them a black problem—"isolate, isolate", as Tom Wolfe put it in *The Bonfire of the Vanities*. The fact that most residents of the wilder French *banlieues* and their European equivalents are white, however, makes it difficult for the larger society to ignore them as "the other." Indeed, the white gun-toter's two best friends in *La Haine* are a North African and a black.

Which leads us to the question: Does Europe have something akin to the American

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underclass? The term itself is controversial. Many Americans object to it on the ground that it is stigmatizing and defines a group of citizens as a species apart. Nevertheless, the term has the virtue of recognition; we know what we mean when we use it. It means a small minority of people, perhaps 2 percent of the population, cut off from the economic and social mainstream with seemingly little chance of ever joining it—or seeing their children join it. Europeans refuse to adopt the "U" word. The consensus is that there is no underclass in Europe, just "social exclusion", "new poverty", "advanced urban marginalization", or a "fourth world." The European Union issues worthy papers and multi-point programs discussing the problem.

But semantics aside, the question remains. And the answer is that if European cities have been spared thus far from the most hideous effects of American-style blight, they are heading in that direction—and on a huge scale. There are two ways in which adults connect themselves to the larger society: through work and through family life. When both those links weaken, the result is isolation, alienation, and hopelessness; and when it comes to both jobs and family structures, Europe has cause for worry.

Unemployment

AS TO JOBS, Europe has proved grossly unable to get its unemployed—and, increasingly, its never-employed—into work. The statistics are stark. Almost one in nine adults in Europe (defined as the fifteen members of the EU) is unemployed; many more are in training courses, have taken early retirement, or receive "disability" pay—all often thin disguises for unemployment. Only 60 percent of European adults of working age are actually employed, three percentage points lower than in 1991 and significantly less than the American rate of 72 percent. While many of the non-working adults are students and housewives, some portion of the twelve point difference is unemployment by another name. Overall, 4.5 million fewer Europeans were working at the end of 1996 than in 1991, even though the size of the labor force stayed roughly the same. All this is bad enough. Even worse is that average European youth unemployment (those under twenty-four who are not in school) is more than 20 percent, and the figure is twice that in Spain. More than half of all unemployed have been jobless for a year or more, 30 percent for more than two. This matters, for employers are not shy in saying that they would prefer not to interview, much less hire, the long-term unemployed. More than a third of those who are long-term unemployed have *never* worked.

By contrast, not only is America's unemployment rate half that of Europe, but only 11 percent of its unemployed have been jobless for more than a year. In both cases, however, the less educated workers are, the more likely they are to be unemployed. Those with the minimum education in Europe are twice as likely to be unemployed as the rest of the population. In France, for example, in 1994, 13.5 percent of workers with low levels of education were unemployed (in 1981, it was 5.4 percent), while only 5.9 percent of the highly educated were out of work (3 percent in 1984).

There are two other troubling aspects to Europe's employment situation. First, the unskilled—that is, those who are the most likely to be unemployed—are in no position to win most of the jobs that are being created or vacated. Second, most of these new jobs are in fields that historically have been more attractive to women. Indeed, women have accounted for *all* the growth of the labor force since 1975, according to the EU's "Employment in Europe" study; 70 percent of women are now in the labor force, the highest rate ever. Over the same period, employment rates for men have fallen. "Most disturbingly", the EU notes, "there is an increasing withdrawal from the labor market of men in the prime age group 25-49." And it is getting worse, as more men withdrew from the labor

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force during the 1990-95 period than in the previous five years. The reason is that the kinds of jobs that have been created are those that women are more likely to want: office work, health care, social work, retailing, and certain service industries. At the same time, jobs in agriculture and heavy industry—traditional men's work—continue to decline.

Why is this important? Because work is a crucial maturing experience for young men. There is no more volatile, or violent, section of human society than a pack of idle young males. In a neighborhood where most of the women do not work outside the home, the image is that of soccer moms or chatting matrons. In a neighborhood where most of the men do not work, the image is far more sinister, and rightly so. However much sexual egalitarians would have us believe that it doesn't much matter who earns the bacon and who cooks it, in real life it still does.

Families in Decline

WHICH BRINGS US to family structures. Young women have shown themselves reluctant to marry men without jobs or prospects. That does not mean, however, that they will necessarily defer motherhood, which is a positive experience in itself, and also a way of finding social purpose. In addition to trends that have removed much of the stigma from bearing children out of wedlock, benefit systems make single motherhood not only possible but mostly devoid of economic penalty. Women can find it about as profitable—and a lot less trouble—to marry the state, perhaps supplemented by part-time work, as to wed a jobless man.

Here, too, the statistics are startling. Births to single women have risen to unprecedented levels in all of northern Europe—to more than a third of all births in Britain and France, to over half in Scandinavia, and to one-fifth in Germany. (The poorer, mostly Catholic southern tier is largely exempt from this trend, though, interestingly, Ireland is not.) And while the trend is now increasing at a lower rate, it has not stopped. It is true that in Scandinavia more than 90 percent of births are registered to both parents and in Britain about 75 percent. But the fact is that couple dissolution rates among unmarried parents are far higher than among married ones—three times as high in Sweden, for example. The upshot is that an increasing number of children spend part of their lives with just one parent, almost always the mother. This matters because single mothers are conspicuously less prosperous than their married counterparts, and their children less successful.

After a long intellectual tussle, America has finally agreed that this is so. Europe has not quite, with the possible exception of Britain. Tony Blair nailed the family values banner to the Labour Party's mast at the September 1997 party conference. Much of his audience, it must be said, was visibly unenthused. The commendable desire not to stigmatize children of single parents has made it difficult to discuss the phenomenon of lone parenthood as a social problem that is as serious in its way as unemployment or crime. Indeed, one member of an official EU study group on the family notes that researchers have gathered compelling evidence to this effect, but have had difficulty getting a hearing.

While illegitimacy is rising among all social classes, it is rising fastest and the state of fatherlessness is lasting longest the lower down the economic ladder one looks. Sue Slipman, former head of Britain's National Council for One Parent Families, an advocacy group, has noted that, "There are no more mothers than there have ever been in these communities; there are just fewer committed fathers." Among the least-skilled workers, she continues, "If men have little to bring to the family party and women continue to sustain the burden of parenting and breadwinning, [women] will go on questioning what is the point of a man."

Perhaps such men could stay home while their wives go off to work at the nursery school. That, too, seems unappealing. The

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EU has the great virtue of measuring everything, and its statistics show what any but a handful of women could tell them: that while men are doing more of the housework—and probably feel tremendously virtuous about deigning to help—they are still not doing anywhere near half of it. The tasks that Europeans think should mainly be carried out by the father are sport, money-earning, and punishment; those that should be done by the mother are dressing, changing diapers, and feeding. Not much New Age philosophy here. More than three-quarters of those surveyed (75 percent of women and 87 percent of men) believed it best if the mother stays home with a young child. And yet, more and more children are growing up in situations where it is impossible for any such division of labor to occur because there is no man about.

No European country has anything like America's teenage birth rates. Being born to a single teenage mother is the worst possible beginning for a child, and America laps the field in this sad statistic. American teens are almost twice as likely as British ones to have a baby, eight times as likely as French, German, and Spanish girls, and twelve times as likely as Dutch ones. Moreover, the child poverty rate in Europe is much lower than in America, due in part to more generous benefit systems. But no thoughtful person can look at social trends in Europe today and be sanguine.

Apartness

THE FINAL devastating trend is that Europe's poor and jobless are increasingly inhabiting a place apart. In Britain, for example, the hugely successful policy of allowing tenants to buy their public housing—itself of generally superior quality to that of America—meant that many working people on good estates—one and a half million households—did so, while others moved out into the liberalized property market. More than two-thirds of Britons now own their own homes, compared to 57 percent in 1980. All this is to the good. But the unfortunate side effect is that public housing has become the residence of last resort.

Indeed, that has happened in part because of official policy, with some estates being effectively singled out for the homeless and destitute. These are commonly known as "sink estates", and everyone knows where they are. European societies have explicitly made the state the houser of last resort, and thus have fewer visible social failures than America, where housing assistance is a matter of luck, not entitlement. (Only a quarter of Americans who meet the eligibility requirements for housing subsidies get them.) Moreover, living in public housing does not carry the same stigma as it often does in America. The fact remains, however, that the social composition of public housing has changed dramatically. Well into the 1970s, a third of people in the upper 40 percent of the income distribution lived in Britain's council housing; now almost none of them do. Public housing is increasingly inhabited by single-parent families, the poor, the unemployed, the dependent, and the old. They are discernibly different from the rest of society.

This apartness is not unique to Britain. Pierre Bourdieu, a well-respected French social scientist, calls it "the translation of economic division into spatial division." In a report to the EU, Michael Wegener notes that residents of Griesheim "view their neighborhood as a ghetto—the Bronx in Frankfurt." Parts of suburban Paris are known as "little Chicagos"; German cities have neighborhoods known as Colditz (after a World War II prisoner-of-war camp), Gulag (self-explanatory), and Bantustan (a derogatory racial reference). In Amsterdam and The Hague as well, the poor and the marginal tend to have each other as neighbors and barely participate in dominant societal institutions such as the labor market, education, and recreational activities.

When working people move out and leave only the intermittently or casually employed poor, the effects ripple through a neighborhood in various and always negative

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ways. People don't like to admit coming from "bad" neighborhoods; doing so can make it more difficult to get a job, or even a date. Outsiders don't want to visit, taxis would rather not travel there, and the territorial stigma becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy. Those who can do so move out to avoid the taint, and the only families to move in are those who have no other place to go. Anne Power, who has written extensively about public housing in Europe, estimates that 5.5 million households in northern Europe are living in "unpopular and difficult to let" estates that are experiencing what we now commonly refer to as "ghetto trends."

Still, things could be worse. In the United States, the final degradation has been the collapse of public institutions and private commerce within the ghetto. Nicholas Lemann notes in *The Promised Land*, an influential 1991 book about the origins of the American underclass, that schools, police, and government agencies in the most troubled areas tend to "give off a feeling not of hope or progress but of containment—of not letting things get out of hand to the point where life outside the ghetto would be directly affected." Europe has avoided the worst of this deterioration. In Hamburg's Wilhelmsburg, for example, one of the poorest parts of the city, there are specialty shops and boutiques, banks, and grocery stores, even a travel agency and a Mormon church—the kinds of institutions that can't keep, or don't try to keep, a foothold in America's worst ghettos. The public phones work, and the three-story brick council flats look in good shape. Flower boxes and lawn ornaments add touches of individuality that many residents of American cities don't bother with any more, on the reasonable assumption that any such efforts would be vandalized or stolen. Wilhelmsburg does not feel scary.

Labor Markets

THIS IS MUCH to Europe's credit, and there is no doubt that America could learn from it a good deal about maintaining public civility, and indeed graciousness, in poor areas. But that does not mean that America's worst problems can never happen in Europe. There are things, too, that Europe can learn from America—chiefly about getting people into work. Indeed, in the Summer issue of this magazine, Steven Muller went so far as to argue that in Europe work is becoming a privilege and idleness a burden. Muller mostly blames technological advance for what he foresees as an inexorable increase in unemployment, but the idea that technology will displace humans has been a feature of economic thinking since the dawn of the Industrial Revolution, when the Luddites smashed the power looms that threatened their hand-weaving jobs. The looms *did* take these men's jobs, but the absolute number of jobs, as technology has succeeded technology, has continually grown: fewer chimney sweeps and buggy whip manufacturers, more aerobics instructors and air conditioner repairmen. Even though the European job market has shrunk of late, there are still 10 million more Europeans in work now than in 1980, and almost 50 million more among the top seven industrialized nations—and this increase has come during a period of intense technological change.

The issue is not so much the quantity of work as the distribution of it. Jobs on the lower end of the skill ladder are disappearing faster than those further up and they are not being replaced. This is why unemployment is disproportionately a problem of the less educated. But Muller is wrong to assume that just because there is less low-skilled work being performed in Europe, there is no demand for it. There *is* a demand, but Europe has organized itself in ways that make it almost impossible for low-skilled people to work in the legal economy. European labor markets are structured essentially to pay the lower skilled to stay home; in America, they can still find something to do, some point of entry, and then work their way up. Policy decisions, not economic inevitabilities,

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account for America's higher rate of job creation and labor force participation—as well as its higher degree of income inequality.

In effect, Europe has created a two-tiered labor market. The insiders are those who have full-time, secure, well-paying jobs, or who are married to those who do. They are rewarded handsomely; one of America's most important social problems, that of the working poor, is not an issue in Europe. Through working, Europeans both contribute and have access to a wide range of benefits.

Those who are outside the labor market have a more difficult time than ever getting in, as the relentless rise in long-term unemployment proves. "Labour is too expensive", Bruno Bonduelle, chairman of a canning company in the city of Lille in northwestern France, told the *Wall Street Journal* in August. His company has cut its work force by four hundred people in the last seven years. Lille's metro system is sleek and modern—and has no drivers. The labor was considered too expensive. Even for the most diligent job seeker, Europe is a tough environment. High minimum wages, whether by statute or custom, mean the unemployed cannot price themselves into work; and high non-wage and firing costs give employers pause before taking on new workers in the first place, even when their businesses are growing—a phenomenon Europe knows as "jobless growth." These labor standards were enacted to protect workers and promote cooperation between labor and management, and they did so when everyone worked. They are a positive nuisance now, but are so deeply ingrained that they have become habit. When Renault announced in early 1997 that it would shut its Belgian plant, street protests demanded that the government erect higher barriers to firing. The European social model, the generosity of its provisions, also means that choosing not to work can be sensible. "There are really people who choose the welfare system", says Godfried Engbersen, a Dutch social scientist. "Some of our welfare systems put people in very passive positions. That's the policy dilemma." Europe's postwar social welfare model was based on full-time employment for all men, stable families, lots of children, stay-at-home mums, and not too many old folks; now that none of these holds true anymore, the systems are strained.

But instead of responding to the new realities, Europe is hanging onto the old structures with grim determination. Jacques Chirac's modest efforts to impose a degree of austerity on the French welfare state were stopped dead in their tracks in the May 1997 elections. IG Mettal, Germany's largest trade union, called for a 32-hour work week at a time when the country was suffering from the worst unemployment since the pre-Hitler period. German employers are on track to invest almost $25 billion abroad this year. As Peter Blau of the Thyssen Group told the *Financial Times*, "It is most definitely a question of exporting jobs." Only Britain and to some extent the Netherlands have taken the plunge toward flexible labor markets. And while they are hardly free of the social problems discussed here, it is no coincidence that they have the lowest unemployment rates in Europe.

IS THERE anything wrong with this? After all, no one is starving in the Netherlands, or indeed in Europe. The awful want that used to be associated with poverty in earlier decades is all but gone. There are, however, consequences to the economic ostracism of a large minority of people. For one, such discouragement correlates strongly to both crime and broken homes, both of which exact costs on everyone. It is not possible to seal off people the way a troubling disease can be quarantined. More important is simply that no country can be at ease with itself if it casts a group of its citizens as permanent misfits. This does not mean that governments must necessarily become ever more intrusive; Europe in fact might be better served if the public stopped seeing the state as provider of last resort in every sphere. But giving up on a large number of citizens and

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their children—in effect, keeping them fed and watered as one would a collection of pets—is a deeply uncivilized thing to do. Mores that would allow that to happen reflect a society that would be terribly unpleasant for nearly everyone to live in.

For years, Europeans sniffed at America's frisky but "cruel" economy, where people change jobs and even careers with a verve that can appear chaotic. The Old World, one heard—and still hears—had opted for security and a more egalitarian ethic as opposed to the New World's bent toward opportunity and achievement. In its time, that was a defensible trade-off. It is no longer so: for what these days remains of Europe's security? The irony is a painful one. By making job creation prohibitively difficult, postwar Europe's well-meaning effort to create generous social benefits has laid the groundwork for the creation of a permanent underclass—the absence of which had heretofore been Europe's proudest, and most legitimate, counter-argument to the American economic model. □

No Sceptical Conclusions Follow

It may be that the ideal of freedom to live as one wishes—and the pluralism of values connected with it—is only the late fruit of our declining capitalist civilization: an ideal which remote ages and primitive societies have not known, and one which posterity will regard with curiosity, even sympathy, but little comprehension. This may be so; but no sceptical conclusions seem to me to follow. Principles are not less sacred because their duration cannot be guaranteed. Indeed, the very desire for guarantees that our values are eternal and secure in some objective heaven is perhaps only a craving for the certainties of childhood or the absolute values of our primitive past. 'To realise the relative validity of one's convictions', said an admirable writer of our time, 'and yet stand for them unflinchingly, is what distinguishes a civilised man from a barbarian.' To demand more than this is perhaps a deep and incurable metaphysical need; but to allow it to guide one's practice is a symptom of an equally deep, and far more dangerous, moral and political immaturity.

"Two Concepts of Liberty"
Isaiah Berlin, 1909-1997

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Too Much Memory

A Beginner's Guide to the Irish Question

Robin Fox

WHEN I arrived in Northern Ireland last July 1, among other reasons to observe the local "marching season", I bought the *Belfast News Letter* and the London *Times*. The former devoted sixteen of its thirty-two pages to the pending crisis over the Drumcree Orange "march" and the threat of local Catholic nationalists to protest by putting women and children in its path (with, according to this Protestant newspaper, IRA agitators operating behind this cowardly cover). The *Times* on the other hand devoted *not a single word* to the march in all fifty-six of its pages (not including the computer advertising supplement).

One may read too much into such a discrepancy. But, at the least, it reflects the weary British attitude to all Northern Ireland matters; a wish that they would all just vanish. The vast majority of the British (and I here include Scots and Welsh) know little and care less about Northern Ireland. They have scant understanding of the IRA's elaborate constitutional, historical, and metaphysical justifications for its bloody actions, and see only the work of fanatical madmen who enjoy violence for its own sake. As to the Ulster Protestants, and especially the extreme voices of the Orange Order and the Democratic Unionists, the British public is mostly mystified and obviously irritated. These sectarian fanatics invoke religious and political agendas that belong properly in the seventeenth century.

The Catholic nationalists if anything make more sense to most British observers: They want union with the Republic of Ireland. But do they really? While paying lip service to a united Ireland, polls have a majority of Catholics expressing fears of this actually happening, since they would lose all the social service, pension, unemployment, and national health benefits they now enjoy under "British rule."

The Protestant Orange loyalists, despite their insistence that "Ulster is British" (an ideological, not an ethnographic assertion), do not want "British rule" either. They want local Protestant rule in the province, restoring things to the simple way they once were: Protestants on top, Catholics at the bottom—the Orange order of nature before "British rule" intervened, disbanded their parliament (Stormont), and imposed direct rule from Westminster in 1972.

Then again, the IRA/Sinn Fein (and do we mean the "official", i.e., Marxist, or "provisional", i.e., nationalist?) is not interested in ending "British rule" so that Northern Ireland can pass into the hands of "Dublin." What is little understood outside Ireland is that the IRA (either flavor) is as opposed to the Dublin government (of whatever party, not that any-

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one can tell the difference) as it is to "British rule." It is a banned organization in the Irish Republic also, and is pledged to unseat the "unconstitutional" government there and install itself as the legitimate successor to the almost mystical "first Dail" of the 1916 Easter Rising. The IRA, from Eamon de Valera onward, has never had much time for the democratic process. By its holy "blood sacrifice" it established itself to its own satisfaction as the voice of the "real Ireland", and if a majority of voters still think otherwise then so much the worse it will be for them. The Irish are not averse to killing each other (remember Dr. Johnson's remark: "The Irish are a fair people; they never speak well of one another"). Indeed, the IRA, under the evil influence of de Valera, fought a civil war to thwart the wishes of the majority of a democratic electorate. In the process they treacherously killed Michael Collins—the man who, with Sir James Craig in the North, might just have found an early solution to "the problem." (Neil Jordan and Liam Neeson have given a fair if confusing rendering of this bloody period in the recent film *Michael Collins.*)

(Note how in this paragraph and elsewhere virtually everything pertaining to Northern Ireland has to be put in scare quotes, since nothing is what it seems to be. Note also that although one tends to use the terms Protestant, Orange, and loyalist as synonyms, there are Protestants who are not members of the Orange Order or the Unionists parties. Equally, Catholics are usually nationalists and republicans, although some are not, and by no means do all support Sinn Fein or the IRA. Also, although Ulster is used synonymously with Northern Ireland, especially by the Protestants, the ancient province of Ulster included much more of Ireland than the six counties, and it is therefore used also in this "cultural" sense. Hang in there.)

Even more irritating than the British public's ostrich attitude is that of the typical American, and especially the typical American media. In advertisements in video stores for the above-mentioned film, we are told not only that Sinn Fein was the "military arm" of the IRA (instead of the other way around), but also that post-World War I was a time when "the British" were executing patriots by the score. Actually, "the British"—military courts acting under martial law—executed only six of the (technically treasonable) leaders of the Easter Rebellion and gave the others nominal jail sentences. Of course even that was a huge political blunder—pretty much the story of British relations with Ireland—but the army acted before the politicians considered the consequences, and Sinn Fein swept the next Irish elections.

In other respects, too, the lowest common denominator holds pride of place. Whenever one picks up an American newspaper (*USA Today* is a prime offender) the letters IRA are followed in parentheses by the mantra, "which is fighting to end British rule in Northern Ireland." That, as I have discovered over thirty years, is about all most Americans know or care to know about the situation. What it should read is, "whose official wing is fighting to establish a Marxist state throughout Ireland, including the overthrow of the legitimate government of the Irish Republic where it is an outlaw organization; and whose non-Marxist 'provisional' wing is seeking a similar but non-Marxist overthrow of governments in Belfast and Dublin; and which is bitterly opposed by over a million Protestant Irishmen and enjoys only limited support even among Catholic nationalists in the North." And that is only the half of it.

Ask even an Irish-American what the relationship is between the various versions of Sinn Fein and the various IRAs, and confusion ensues. As I arrived back in the United States after my visit, I was greeted by a special feature in the Newark *Star-Ledger* in which the writer advanced the interesting theory that "sectarian intransigence" was just "British propaganda" to cover up the "simple truth" that the only thing really going on in the province was the IRA fight to end British rule. The writer was brutally honest in admitting that he chose this answer because it was "simple and I

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can understand it." All this stuff about deep-rooted stubborn sectarian intransigence was just a smoke screen; remove the British troops and British rule and all would be peaceful. "Would they really kill each other when all they had was each other?" he eloquently asked.

To which the proper answer is: "Of course they would, you idiot." It was to stop the Belfast Catholics from being massacred by their Protestant brethren that the British army came in in the first place, nearly thirty years ago. But such facts are irrelevant to those for whom hating "the British" is a way of life, an emotional prop without which their existence would lack meaning. And this is at the very heart of the problem in Northern Ireland, too. So many groups and individuals have such an emotional—nay, paranoid—investment in the status quo that, despite countless pious statements to the contrary, *they don't want the problem solved.*

The Logic of Ulster

BUT WHAT then is "the Northern Ireland Problem" that so defies solution? That definitive book of "memorable British history" (as the authors explain, they mean history we actually remember), *1066 And All That*, turns to "the Irish Problem." As it explains, every schoolboy remembers that Mr. Gladstone was always on the verge of solving "the Irish Problem" when "the Irish went back into the bogs and changed the problem." So poor Gladstone never did pass a Home Rule Bill. But the British Parliament did in fact pass such a bill on May 14, 1914. This bill was, with the agreement of the Irish Parliamentary Party, shelved until the First World War was over, after which it was to be implemented. The 1914 Home Rule Bill, according to "revisionist" (i.e., non-partisan and often Welsh) historians, rendered the Easter Rising of 1916 quite pointless. That event served only Padraig Pearse's religious desire for a "redemptive blood sacrifice" to "sanctify" the de facto achievement of Irish independence. The more cynical might see it as an attempted power grab by the republican factions. But despite their bloody war, they ended up in 1921 with what had been in the 1914 bill anyway—except that, having totally alienated the Ulster Protestants with their "treason", they ultimately got a border that was not just a temporary truce line to be overseen by a Council of All Ireland, but a border that divided Ireland firmly and, for the Northern Protestants, irrevocably.

This is where myth and power plays combined to overwhelm pragmatism in Ireland. De Valera started a civil war in which more Irishmen killed each other than the notorious British Black and Tans had ever managed to kill. Moreover, they did so not over the tentative partition of Ireland as negotiated by Collins in the 1921 Anglo-Irish agreement, but over the matter of an *oath of allegiance* to King George V. And this after de Valera himself had proposed for the Irish Free State a "form of external association" with England that was the equivalent of the dominion status enjoyed by Canada and Australia. The republicans under de Valera lost the election on this issue, refused to accept the results, and started the civil war of 1922-3—fought over nothing but a form of words, but whose bitter fruits still live with us today. In every Irish election, the Fine Gael party (Collins' legacy) is excoriated by its opponents in Fianna Fail (de Valera's legacy) as "the Treaty Party." As the Italian statesman Cavour once remarked, "In politics, too much memory is a dangerous thing"—surely the definitive judgment on Irish politics, north and south.

Little has changed fundamentally in Ulster, too, despite heroic efforts at "integration" on the local level. Take the now-notorious annual Drumcree "Orange March" that in the summer of 1997 threatened to throw the province into chaos and provoke riots and mayhem. What is it really about? Nothing substantial at all. It is not about homes or jobs, land, or any kind of discrimination or oppression. It is a purely symbolic activity: the "march"—what Americans would call a "parade"—of members of the Orange Order

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from their church to their meeting hall for tea and cake. In a predominantly Protestant town it normally caused no problem in the past, but Catholics have moved into a small area of the town that straddles the route of the march—the Garvaghy Road. They have characterized marching through this area as a display of Orange "triumphalism" (a new favorite buzzword) and declared it a "no-go" area for Protestant marches. The Orangemen cite their long-standing and legal right to parade down the public highway; the Catholics insist that the march is an "insult" to their nationalist feelings and vow to disrupt it.

If you happen not to share the feelings of either side, all this is virtually unintelligible in rational political terms. Those rows of Orangemen in their black suits, white gloves, bowler hats, furled umbrellas, and orange sashes might as well be Tibetans. They make no sense at all outside an historical context that few non-native onlookers remember or care about. They look peculiar, even peculiarly harmless. What are they going to do—skewer the Catholics on their umbrellas? They will, of course, point out that they had no problem until the IRA stirred up the local Catholics. The IRA (or Sinn Fein speaking for it, or "local spokesmen", or whatever combination) will reply that Orange leaders last year used police (predominantly Protestant) brutality to allow Protestant leaders like the Rev. Ian Paisley to "rub the noses" of the nationalists in "Orange dominance"—and so it goes. Again, to outsiders it resembles one of those "he said/she said" marital quarrels that makes no sense except to those involved in it, and even then only intermittently. There certainly does not seem to be anything in it that justifies the violent response this year's march provoked.

This year the Orange Order decided to play the magnanimity card, thus shifting the blame for any disorder onto the Catholic nationalists. They offered to cease having their accordion band play when passing through the Garvaghy Road, to reduce the number of banners, and even to march six abreast rather than three to speed their passage. This got them brownie points with Tony Blair's Northern Ireland secretary, Mo Mowlem, who, in a flurry of Kissinger-like shuttle diplomacy, went back and forth to try to reach agreement—but to no avail. It was a zero-sum game. *Nothing* was going to stop the march from taking place in some form. *Nothing* equally was going to stop the protests and the IRA exploitation of the situation. The more the Orangemen compromised, the angrier the nationalists got, since nothing short of canceling the march would have satisfied them, and the Orangemen won the PR battle with their concessions. At the same time, the "concessions" (scare quotes as usual) antagonized Orange extremists who believe sincerely that giving an inch means losing a mile. Mowlem was reduced to saying that since agreement was impossible the decision would be taken purely in terms of "security", which is to say damage control. This was bound to be seen as "pro-Protestant" since the Catholics, being a minority, are easier to control—as the 1996 Protestant riots showed when attempts were made to stop some of the marches, and the "loyalists" brought the province to a standstill. Of course the "problem" could have been easily "solved." The nationalists could have gone off and had a big picnic that day and the Orangemen could have just drifted casually from church to hall. When pigs can fly.

Well, Drumcree has come and gone. The scaled-down and hurried-up march, guarded by a huge police and army presence (Mowlem's "security"), went off relatively without incident except for a lot of nationalist noisemaking. But then the logic of Ulster took over once more. The IRA/nationalists could not let this go by without some response, and the Catholic nationalists of the province were evidently "frustrated and angry." Why? Because the Orange march had *not* been unduly "provocative", thus robbing them of the excuse to stage a "justified" mass protest. Result: a "night of anger", complete with petrol bombs, burnt-out cars, and wrecked trains. The British troops who had been put

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on standby to prevent clashes at the march itself were rushed away immediately after so as to leave no "legitimate" targets for the IRA; so the police were left to deal with the "frustrated" demonstrators. The aftermath took some strange turns that mark it as peculiarly Irish. *The Independent* (July 7) solemnly reported that, "In one incident a hospital worker was dragged from his car in Armagh and attacked by masked men who spotted an accordion on the back seat. It is reported they forced him into a nearby park and ordered him to play the instrument while they threw stones at him."

The Orangemen gained, unquestionably, a great PR victory, since the Catholic response to their "moderation" simply looked like savage vandalism. (The rioting and burning had actually started before the march took place, but this was not reported on U.S. television.) So much encouraged are they by this that the Orangemen have decided to play the magnanimity card to the full and are pulling back marches across the province. This gets them pats on the head from the politicians, but it won't solve any of the underlying problems. Such is the state of mind in Ulster, however, that solving symbolic problems involving short-term ritualistic violence comes to look like a "real" issue. Thus the IRA has indeed responded to Orange magnanimity by declaring its trump card: yet another "cease fire." This will get Gerry Adams into the peace talks, and "provoke" an angry Orange response demanding IRA disarmament—and so on and on. These games keep everyone occupied, provide momentary satisfactions and momentary tragedies, and solve nothing.

Zero-Sum

SO WHAT WILL solve the problem? The answer must begin with the recognition that, contrary to much received "wisdom", the mess that is now Northern Ireland was created by *a failure of the British to rule*. Since its founding in 1921 until the "troubles" of roughly 1969, the British government was happy to let Northern Ireland rule itself, from its own Parliament at Stormont. This meant, in effect, letting the Protestant majority rule, which it did with gusto, making sure it controlled the gerrymandered electoral districts, the police, the civil service, public housing, and so on. The failure of the Catholic minority to participate was clearly a result of this active discrimination, as well as of their own unwillingness to participate in a governmental process many of them considered illegitimate. Thus, Sinn Fein members elected to Stormont or Westminster routinely refused to take their seats (and still do in the case of Westminster).

The Catholic protest movements of the late 1960s and early 1970s were not against "British rule" at all; they were against Protestant discrimination. Modeled on the U.S. civil rights movement, protesters demanded equal treatment for Catholics. The IRA/Sinn Fein then infiltrated this "movement" and manipulated it to cause Stormont maximum embarrassment. I knew personally several IRA ex-jailbirds who were regularly paraded in the U.S. media—pictures and all—as "innocent civil rights workers" abused by the hated Police Specials. The Protestant authorities responded as they always had done, repressively. The situation got out of hand, Catholic communities were savagely attacked, and at last the British government was *forced* to rule by sending in troops to protect the Catholics. The troops were initially greeted with cheers, tears, and tea by the beleaguered Catholics in Belfast. The British government followed this by abolishing the Stormont parliament and imposing "direct rule" from Westminster because of the recalcitrance of the Protestants. So it was that, very reluctantly, "British rule" did come about, but only after the Northern Ireland Act of 1974, and this, again, to protect Catholics from discrimination and terror.

But then the whole situation turned sour. The IRA (provisional) was rejuvenated by the Protestant attacks—it had been down to about two hundred active members before that. British troops were a godsend, for they pro-

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vided "legitimate" targets (as opposed to women and children). It should by now be obvious to us all—but isn't to most interfering governments—that regular army troops are not suited for such "police actions." They tend to respond militarily—which is to say when shot at they shoot back, thus starting a war with the very people they were sent to protect. The troops found it hard to distinguish the real gunmen from the Catholic population into which they were able to disappear and blend. The frustrations created by this situation soon made the troops the "enemy." Hence the revived IRA, the growth of ever more intransigent fanaticisms on each extreme, the attempts at forming "center" movements dedicated to peace, the annual violence of the "marching season", and all the rest of the dismal catalogue of ritualized insanity. And the core problem remains the same, however much outsiders insist on misunderstanding it. It has nothing to do with "British rule" or the IRA fighting to end it, everything to do with a rising demand for fair treatment *under* "British rule" and with the IRA's determination to end all rule in Ireland except its own. I have listened to Sinn Fein dreamers describe their armored columns driving into a submissive Dublin with Gerry Adams waving in triumph to a converted Irish public—after the British have been thrown out and the Orangemen "pacified" in the North. We laugh. But then they laughed at Castro.

In a strange sense (though what is strange and what is normal in this context is hard to determine), the extremists are the most logical. This is a zero-sum situation. Here you have a territory with two claimants. Each wants outright ownership. There is no compromise solution. You can't half-own a national territory. It's either yours and the others submit or move, or you lose totally. The "no surrender" Protestants ("gut Protestants", they are sometimes called) and the IRA extremists at least get an "A" for consistency. Every other group has to live with a schizophrenic logic in which it simultaneously supports the ultimate goals that the extremists of its side demand and yet urges the kind of perceived improvements that would diminish the pressure for achieving those goals.

Claims and Wants

WHAT ARE THE real wishes of the various constituencies? I have been conversant with the Northern Ireland situation for over forty years now—every class and faction—and while no formula can do the situation justice without some distortion, I'll try this one: Northern Ireland is the country that everyone *claims* but that no one *wants*. Although the Catholics/nationalists/republicans claim Northern Ireland, they don't want it as an entity, but simply wish to merge it with Eire. The Protestants/Unionists/loyalists claim it, but what they want is for it to be an integral part of the United Kingdom. The British government claims it, if only half-heartedly, because their own law requires them to do so; but they would be only too happy to be rid of it and its ruinous drain on the British economy. The Irish Republic, of course, claims it as an integral part of Ireland "whole and undivided", with all the accompanying rhetoric. But its leaders, too, are horrified at the thought of having to deal with the Northern Protestants and the attendant problems—to say nothing of adding the Northern unemployed to their own not inconsiderable roster. Better let "the British" deal with it and get the bad press while Dublin can maintain its holier-than-thou position. (I used to talk with Conor Cruise O'Brien in the members' bar at Leinster House when he was a Labour Party member—and later Minister of Posts and Telegraphs. He had been for several years on the Dail's "Committee to Study the Implications of Irish Unity." I asked him what, after all these years, the committee had decided the implications were. "Horrendous", he replied.)

Many commentators aver that in the last analysis a "solution" has to be some kind of federal system that provides considerable autonomy for the North. Sinn Fein in fact came up with not a bad version of such an

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arrangement. (This might seem paradoxical, for Sinn Fein aims to rule a united Ireland and should not care about special provisions for "the North." But remember that even though Sinn Fein MPs refuse to take their two seats at Westminster, they still complain bitterly that the House of Commons won't then give them office space. Don't expect linear thinking.)

The logic of "Ireland one and undivided" escapes most Protestant Unionists. "Geography is not nationality", they will tell you. Ireland may be an island, but it was never a united kingdom, only a collection of warring chiefdoms. Plenty of islands are politically divided. To the argument that Ulster Protestants are descended from immigrant Scots and English "planters" in the seventeenth century and therefore have fewer rights than the "native Irish", they reply that the "native Irish" are in fact a mongrelized group of the descendants of Celts, Romans, Danes, Normans, and the later English. And some even have the audacity to ask Irish-American fanatics when they expect to give New York, Boston, and Chicago back to the Indians.

As may be gathered from such recitations, the Unionists, like the Serbs, are not good at PR. Like the Serbs, they scorn it since they regard their own position as self-evidently virtuous. But they can put up a stout argument for their own case. "Ulster will fight, and Ulster will be right", said Lord Randolph Churchill, and he, and Ulster, *meant* the bit about being right. No argument on behalf of a "natural" or even mystical Irish "nationhood" carries any weight, then, with the Unionists. Hence we are left with a "problem" that has no "solution" as in logic or math.

Peregrine Worsthorne has argued in these pages (Summer 1996) that it is a clash of two nationalisms; perhaps, but it may be more precise to call it a clash of two tribalisms. Nationalism is an attempt to produce a closed tribal mentality in an otherwise heterogeneous population. Garibaldi once famously announced, "We have made Italy, now let us see if we can make Italians." But in Ulster the tribes are ready-made by religion. The Protestants regard themselves as "established" by their own "blood sacrifice" in defending, virtually unaided, Britain's "back door" against the Catholic European powers seeking to use Irish Catholic nationalism as a weapon to reinstate the hated James II and the "Popery" he represented (that was three centuries ago). To this tribe the other is not just "foreign", but heretical, evil, treasonous, and treacherous. To keep it subjugated is a holy as well as a patriotic duty. Belfast Protestants will still show you chamber pots with pictures of the Pope on the inside (even if they don't use them any more). The British people, who have long since ceased to care much about organized religion (2 percent church attendance), are startled to hear sectarian invective about the Protestant "King Billy" and the Catholic Pope that carries only the faintest echoes of ill-remembered history texts. These, for the British, are not only weird tribes, but tribes *from the past.* Indeed, for the vast majority of the British they could as well be from a different planet.

As we have found from Rwanda to Cambodia to Bosnia, when two or more such tribes dispute for total dominance, there are only two "solutions": one tribe wins and massacres and intimidates the other into quiescence; or some third party imposes a "peace" that is never more than temporary. If "British rule" is equated with the British army presence, then every Ulsterman knows (even if many nationalists dare not openly admit) that without that presence the province, and eventually the whole of Ireland, would lapse back into civil war. Given the record, most punters would back the fanatically determined and well-organized Protestants in such a struggle, even if the Irish army were to get involved. A cynical English friend gave as his "solution" (for the British, that is): "Arm the Protestants to the teeth and clear out."

Almost all honest observers end by throwing up their hands and despairing of a

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"rational" solution. Paradoxically (as we should routinely start any paragraph on the Ulster problem), the extremists have everything to gain from the chaotic status quo. For the IRA, as noted, the presence of British troops gives them a heaven-sent *raison d'être*; for the Ulster Volunteer Force and other Protestant extremists, the activity of the IRA gives them theirs. For Sinn Fein, the IRA remains a bargaining point in their struggle to stay in the power game. For the extreme Unionists again, this nationalist activity makes them, not the moderates, the "true" voice of the Protestants. And how that voice has changed from the landowning aristocratic leadership of Carson, Brookeborough, Craigavon, O'Neill, and Chichester-Clark, to the fundamentalist evangelical proletarians Paisley and Trimble and their successful breakaway Democratic Unionist Party. To the despair of the few active socialists and the puzzlement of most sociologists, tribalism triumphs over class in Ulster as easily as it does in the Near East and sub-Saharan Africa.

Bottoms Up

WHILE THE VESTED political interests really don't want a solution, without question the mass of people, of whatever persuasion, do. They want peace. The genuine desire for a cessation of the stress and terror and economic hardship are heartbreakingly obvious. Unfortunately, this translates into an intention to keep the tribal divisions but somehow avoid the violence. As we have seen, this is an unlikely outcome. Could the British and Irish governments, acting together and with sufficient muscle, ram a "solution" down the throats of a million unwilling Protestants? Given the record, again, the chances are nil.

The real solution will in the end have to be bottom-up rather than top-down. If a new generation of both Protestants and Catholics could arise that was sufficiently sick of the old issues and simply refused to participate in them, then perhaps there might be a chance. The support base of both Sinn Fein and the Orange Order would erode, and "the people" would demand that they be allowed to go about their lives in peace and refuse support for the extremes. If the Protestant extremists and Sinn Fein saw their core support evaporate, they would be forced to compromise. In Northern Ireland this would require a remarkable coincidence of mass feelings from both tribes simultaneously. Such feeling wells up from time to time—one can feel the beat—but it seems to last only until the next sectarian murder, upon which it rapidly degenerates once again into tribal hatred. Secular, rational, consensus, compromise politics are difficult under the best of advanced democratic rule-of-law conditions; they are almost impossible in tribal Ulster.

Still, valiant attempts at "integration" are being made. Perhaps the most effective of them come from such institutions as the University of Ulster, with its four branches embracing the whole of the province, and without the establishment encumbrances of Queen's University in Protestant Belfast, so long under ban to Catholics by their own church. A university system—and this is the fastest growing university in the British Isles, due, among other things, to the high birth rate in Northern Ireland—puts obvious emphasis on merit, skill, and individual achievement. It can bypass the sectarian, tribal divisions and by its very nature substitute secular, rational achievement for tribal emotions and identifications.

One of its boldest proposals is to build an urban campus slap on the "peace line" in Springvale in Belfast proper, turning a derelict "no-go" area into a thriving, youth-centered college town that would deliberately draw on the two "communities" for both students and service employees. They plan, for example, not to have cafeterias and dorms, but—on the explicit model of the old City University of New York—to take students from the community and have them live at home or in digs, and eat in locally run bistros that would spring up to meet the demand.

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Developers would be encouraged to build flats over nearby shopping precincts, and the university would guarantee occupancy by faculty and students.

The plan is immensely imaginative and far-sighted. Unfortunately it is also expensive. Businesses as well as governments will have to help make it work. If Irish-American organizations would divert some of their funds from "Northern Aid" and the like, so much the better. The American government, too, might consider less pompous moralizing and more support for such ventures. None of this will solve the constitutional or tribal problems anytime soon, but enough "Springvale solutions" could gradually render them irrelevant.

A dream? Perhaps. But like most commentators, I feel the need to offer some hope to offset the easy cynicism that comes from a real familiarity with the plight of Ulster. When Orange marches become a rare tourist attraction, and IRA t-shirts are sold as jokes in souvenir shops, then perhaps we'll have a solution. I doubt I'll live to see it, but for the sake of the truly good people of Ulster, I devoutly wish for it and echo the words of the greatest Irish-Englishman, Edmund Burke: "Indeed England and Ireland may flourish together. The world is large enough for us both. Let it be our care not to make ourselves too little for it."

PS: Since this was written there has been another orgy of "hope" for the "peace talks" now at last in progress. On October 26, the *New York Times* opined that, "After 28 years of sectarian violence in Northern Ireland, peace is quietly settling across this British province." Tony Blair, it is argued, has no need of Ulster Unionist votes and so can "ignore" the Protestants. He has agreed to meet with Sinn Fein *without* requiring the IRA to disarm, and has even shaken the hand of ex-gunman Gerry Adams. The response of gut-Protestants was to pelt Blair with rubber gloves—implying he should have used them for the handshake—forcing him to take refuge in a bank. In the meantime the Unionists attend under protest, and the IRA, for whom any "peace" is tantamount to defeat, sits in the background with its guns and bombs intact. Of course we would all like the "peace talks" to succeed. But exactly what would "success" mean, and for whom? Don't hold your breath. □

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The Prudent Irishman

Edmund Burke's Realism

John R. Bolton

ONE OF THE MANY consequences of Soviet communism's collapse is disarray in the conceptual structures of American foreign policy. Left without a clear focal point, one-time hawks now flap like doves, while erstwhile doves behave like birds of prey. Both the strategic role and the moral purposes of the United States in the world are disputed. For conservatives it is a matter of special concern that confusion exists with particular starkness among those who once held common views as "anti-communists."

Today, Cold War-era anti-communists argue among themselves—and the disagreements are not about tactics. Let us be frank: some have become near isolationists. Others enthusiastically espouse Woodrow Wilson's view that the world needs to be made safe for democracy and its family of values. Some of the latter seem to long for a new crusade to keep America at the top of its game, if nothing else. Then again there are those who see the world as still dangerous, but far more opaquely so than it was during the clearer days of the Cold War. They seek an interests-based foreign policy grounded in a concrete agenda of protecting particular peoples and territories, defending open trade and commercial relations around the world, and advancing a commonality of interests with our allies.

Finding myself in this third school, I often turn for guidance to that political philosopher whose understanding of the interplay of interests and values remains unsurpassed. Edmund Burke's insights into civil society seem strikingly apposite today to American foreign policy. Among those are his reliance on the accretion of experience and reasoning from empirical reality, his abhorrence of elevating abstract principles into a theology, and his fear of driving policy on the basis of metaphysics.

Burke's writings rarely cause the pulse to race, which perhaps explains his consistent lack of popularity among both the college-aged and those who stay that way intellectually while otherwise growing older. Moreover, Burke refused to conclude too much from existing evidence, and that makes him hard for the more passionate former anti-communists to swallow. Burke would have welcomed Irving Kristol's assertion that "no modern nation has ever constructed a foreign policy that was acceptable to its intellectuals." He was humble enough to believe, "Please God, I will walk with caution, whenever I am not able clearly to see my way before me." Burke had the sense as well to be humble for his country:

> Among precautions against ambition, it may not be amiss to take one against our own. I must fairly say I dread our own power and our own ambition. I dread our being too much dreaded. . . . Sooner or later, this state of things

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must produce a combination against us which may end in our ruin."[1]

While Burke's speeches and writings are generally considered a guide to domestic policy (as we understand that term), much of his thinking and active politicking dealt with America, Ireland, India, and, most famously, France. The first three, of course, can properly be understood as imperial concerns, mixing both domestic and foreign policy. Burke's larger political struggle for individual rights against concentrated government authority—a tenet central to his party, the Rockingham Whigs—infused all of these foreign and imperial issues. Since America today finds itself grappling with issues of imperial maintenance—though we call it something else—and with the impact of that task on the philosophy and future of government at home, it may be that an examination of Burke's writings has something useful to teach us. That, in any event, is the premise of what follows.

The Americans

ON THIS SIDE of the Atlantic, Burke is often seen as a friend of the American Revolution, which he most certainly was not. He argued not on behalf of Americans seeking independence, but as a Briton striving, vainly as it turned out, to preserve his country's choicest asset from the foolishness of his own countrymen.

In the first place, Burke argued that it blinked reality for British policymakers to ignore what had happened in America, where "a fierce spirit of liberty has grown up." Not only was Burke undisturbed by the American love of liberty, he feared that London's efforts to reduce that liberty threatened his own:

> . . . in order to prove that the Americans have no right to their liberties, we are every day endeavoring to subvert the maxims which preserve the whole spirit of our own. To prove that the Americans ought not to be free, we are obliged to depreciate the value of freedom itself.

Here is the confluence of interest and ideology so typical of Burke. He was not celebrating America's "spirit of liberty" as a pure value, but because his government's threat to America directly and tangibly threatened *him*.

Second, Burke was appalled at the arguments advanced by the parliamentary supporters of King George III, who seemed determined to justify policies such as taxation of the Americans solely on the basis that they had a sovereign right to do so. In the context of the period, the drumbeat in London about British sovereign rights was nearly an absolute, and would not tolerate objections based merely on practicality and history. Burke, however, disdained the "sovereign right" argument: "I am not here going into the distinctions of rights, nor attempting to mark their boundaries; I hate the very sound of them."

Burke stressed that trade had bound the colonies to England before, and could do so again; taxation had not previously been deemed necessary, and that was reason enough to abandon it now. "These are the arguments of states and kingdoms", he said. "Leave the rest to the schools; for there only may they be discussed with safety." Burke saw correctly that endless disputes with Americans over the abstract concept of sovereignty would "teach them . . . to call that sovereignty itself in question." He warned that "If that sovereignty and their freedom cannot be reconciled, which will they take? They will

[1]All the quotations from Burke come from the following sources: Louis I. Bredvold and Ralph G. Ross, eds., *The Philosophy of Edmund Burke* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1960); Russell Kirk, *Edmund Burke: A Genius Reconsidered* (New Rochelle, NY: Arlington House, 1967); Alice P. Miller, *Edmund Burke and His World* (Old Greenwich, CT: Devin-Adair, 1979); Conor Cruise O'Brien, *The Great Melody: A Thematic Biography of Edmund Burke* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992). Those desiring more specific citations are invited to write the editor for them. All emphases in quotations are in the originals.

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cast your sovereignty in your face. Nobody will be argued into slavery." To Burke, the theory of sovereignty was manifestly secondary to the practical need of keeping the Americans in the Empire.

As a result, Burke was fully content to allow Americans the fullest measure of liberty (which he called "the high spirit of free dependencies"), not for its own sake, but because so doing maximized Britain's chances for retaining America. His argument illustrated classic cost-benefit reasoning:

> In every arduous enterprise, we consider what we are to lose as well as what we are to gain; and the more and better stake of liberty every people possess, the less they will hazard in an attempt to make it more. These are the cords of man. Man acts from adequate motives relative to his interest, and not on metaphysical speculations.

Indeed, Burke cited Aristotle in arguing against "delusive geometrical accuracy in moral arguments, the most fallacious of all sophistry."

Although all this talk about "liberty" might sound suspiciously like "democracy" and "human rights" in today's rhetoric, Burke would disagree. His ideas of "liberty" were just as grounded in reality as his strategy to keep America British. The man who ordinarily disdained broad generalizations said unequivocally that "Abstract liberty, like other mere abstractions, is not to be found. Liberty inheres in some sensible object." For Burke, that "sensible object" was, as it was for the Americans, the measure of taxation.

Indeed, he goes out of his way to note that in "the ancient commonwealths", disputes turned on political issues such as "the right of election of magistrates" because the "question of money was not with them so immediate." Not so in England, says Burke proudly, whose history he correctly summarizes for Parliament in his speech *On Conciliation with America* as having been the struggle between King and people over money. As for the colonists:

> Their love of liberty, as with you, fixed and attached on this specific point of taxing. Liberty might be safe or might be endangered in twenty other particulars without their being much pleased or alarmed. Here they felt its pulse; and as they found that beat, they thought themselves sick or sound.

No mincing of words here—it is the money, not the principle, that measures liberty.

Because Burke's analysis and strategy for dealing with the American problem were so thoroughly rooted in practicalities, it comes as no surprise that in giving them expression he articulated the prudential guidelines that shaped so much of his political life. In the justly famous 1777 *Letter to the Sheriffs of Bristol*, Burke defends the 1766 Rockingham "plan of pacification" for the colonies as "being built upon the nature of man, and the circumstances and habits of the two countries, and not on any visionary speculations." This was, in fact, a plan of prudence, a quality that Burke characterizes "as the god of this lower world."

Unlike those beating the "sovereign rights" drum, Burke pleaded for "rational, cool endeavors" to bring the colonies back into line. He urged that government from London "ought to conform to the exigencies of the time, and the temper and character of the people with whom it is concerned, and not always to attempt violently to bend the people to their theories of subjection." Against those who saw no problem in unleashing force against the colonists to uphold sovereignty, Burke was nearly contemptuous: "A conscientious man would be cautious how he dealt in blood." Consistent with that approach, Burke was not afraid to shift his tactics or his positions as the need arose and as circumstances changed. When challenged on such changes, Burke answered: "Because a different state of things requires a different conduct."

Handling the American question in Burke's way might not have saved the colonies for Britain, but King George III could hardly

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have done worse than he did. Burke's approach was grounded in the political reality of his time, addressed to the vital national interests of England, and utilized practical, commercial, non-coercive means. George and his ministers stood on their absolute, abstract, sovereign rights, and lost the best part of their Empire forever.

Hastings and India

BURKE'S EFFORTS to impeach and convict Warren Hastings, governor-general of Bengal, have confused many people who see Burke's long political campaign against Hastings through modern prisms. Indeed, at first glance, Burke's preoccupation with India seems to be exactly the kind of abstract concern with what today would be called "gross abuses of human rights" that calls into question the interest-based strategy Burke advocated in America. What explains this seeming anomaly?

Burke's interest in India (which, along with America, he never visited) stemmed principally from the same desire to protect individuals from the despotism of arbitrary government that motivated his domestic political battles. Hastings and his allies and subordinates, he believed, governed as if government had no limits. They did what they wanted, took what they wanted, destroyed what they wanted, and killed whom they wanted without regard either to English *or* Indian law or custom. That the government in question was British, and that its subjects were far-away Indians, mattered not in the slightest to Burke. He correctly saw that arbitrary, unchallenged government by his countrymen in India, as across the Atlantic, posed a direct threat to his countrymen at home. As Burke said in a letter, "I know what I am doing; whether the white people like it or not."

Even here, however, Burke proceeded with caution. He insisted on substantial and hard evidence before going after the East India Company, because "I feel an insuperable reluctance in giving my hand to destroy any established institution of government, upon a theory, however plausible it may be." Convinced that he was acting on more than a theory, Burke devoted sixteen years of his life trying unsuccessfully to convict Hastings, including a trial of over seven years before the bar of the House of Lords. As Burke himself said, in this matter more than any other in his whole career, "I laboured with the most assiduity and met with the least success."

For those unfamiliar with the history of eighteenth-century India, the charges and counter-charges surrounding Hastings get lost in such arcane matters as disputes over the Nawob of Arcot's debts, his invasion of Tanjore, and the retaliation of Hyder Ali of Mysore; the treatment of Cheyt Singh, the Rajah of Benares; and the seizure of the assets of the widowed Begums of Oude (among other means, through torturing their servants). The very complexity of the charges against Hastings only highlights how empirically grounded were Burke's concerns. Each of his allegations was supported by ample tangible evidence of high crimes and misdemeanors.

Burke was not unsympathetic to the notion that governing India was a daunting task:

> All these circumstances are not, I confess, very favourable to the idea of our attempting to govern India at all. But there we are; there we are placed by the Sovereign Disposer; and we must do the best we can in our situation. The situation of man is the preceptor of his duty.

Burke in no way contemplated trying to make India look like England: "I never was wild enough to conceive that one method [of governance] would serve for the whole, that the natives of Hindostan and those of Virginia could be ordered in the same manner." Nonetheless, he asserted unambiguously that "there is no action which would pass for an act of extortion, of peculation, of bribery, and of oppression in England, that is not an act of extortion, of peculation, of bribery, and oppression in Europe, Asia, Africa, and all the world over."

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Burke was deeply troubled that the *British* East India Company was a creation of Parliament, and thus that its acts, and those of its agents like Hastings, made Parliament directly responsible for them. Most importantly, Burke saw a direct proprietary relationship between himself and his parliamentary colleagues on the one hand, and Hastings and his subordinates on the other. Burke's concern was not a generalized, theoretical interest in colonial administration, but was centered on the nearly inevitable consequences of British maladministration and corruption:

> But if we are the very cause of the evil, we are in a special manner engaged to the redress; and for us passively to bear with oppressions committed under the sanction of our own authority is in truth and reason for this House to be an active accomplice in the abuse.

Burke felt that "the credit and honor of the British nation itself will be decided by this decision."

The American Framers in Philadelphia were very much aware of the contemporaneous Hastings impeachment proceedings, and it influenced their drafting. George Mason of Virginia argued against limiting the grounds for impeachment to treason and bribery by saying, "Treason . . . will not reach many great and dangerous offenses. Hastings is not guilty of treason." In a sense, then, the final verdict on Hastings may be seen as contained in our own Constitution. For Burke himself, however, India had to be a profound disappointment. His failure to bring along the necessary support of the British body politic had much to do with causes beyond his control, including the magnitude of the huge financial and political interests arrayed against him, and the too-short attention span even of his supporters.

Burke and the Irish Question

CONOR CRUISE O'BRIEN devotes much of his recent thematic biography of Burke to psychoanalyzing him "at the Irish level."[2] Although we abjure the couch here, there is no denying that Ireland's religious conflicts were more deeply personal to Burke than any of his other central political concerns. During the Gordon Riots of 1780, incited to secure repeal of the 1778 British Catholic Relief Act that benefited the Irish and reflected a substantial contribution by Burke, he was confronted in the street by a hostile crowd while walking to Parliament. In a rare public display of his feelings, Burke drew his sword and said, "If you want me, here I am, but never expect that I shall vote for repeal of the act I supported."

We need not decide, for our purposes here, whether Burke was a good Anglican, a covert Roman Catholic, or anything in between, in order to recognize the force of his analysis of the Irish problem. His views on religion were not based on theological judgments on the relative merits of consubstantiation versus transubstantiation, but on a practical appreciation for the crucial role of religion in the civil order:

> I would give a full civic protection . . . to Jews, Mahometans, and even Pagans; especially if they are already possessed of those advantages by long and prescriptive usage, which is as sacred in this exercise of rights, as in any others.

It is thus no surprise that the howls of Lord Gordon's followers for "No Popery!" produced only disgust in Burke.

Nonetheless, the anti-Catholic Penal Laws specifically, and the Protestant Ascendancy in Ireland generally, were political facts of life during Burke's career. Thus it was the absolutism of the "No Popery" position, standing against any enhancement in the status of Catholics, that most offended Burke, not the absence of perfect freedom from religious discrimination. In fact, it was his Irish views that ultimately cost Burke his cherished parliamentary seat from Bristol in the wake of the Gordon Riots.

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[2]O'Brien, pp. 59-86.

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Burke's 1780 *Speech at Bristol Previous to the Election* tried (unsuccessfully) to justify his position on Catholic emancipation in the larger context of the Rockinghams' opposition to unchecked governmental authority. Indeed, by this argument, one almost unrecognized by modern commentators, Burke demonstrates the historical centrality of the Rockingham Whigs to the philosophical genesis of contemporary libertarianism by stressing the role of the individual over the group. As he put it,

> This way of *proscribing the citizens by denominations and general descriptions* . . . is nothing better at bottom than the miserable invention of an ungenerous ambition . . . [to] hold the sacred trust of power.

Burke's efforts to constrict or eliminate the prohibitions of the Penal Laws against Catholics are, therefore, politically indistinguishable from the broader Rockingham efforts to establish the liberty of the individual vis-à-vis the authority of government. "Crimes are the acts of individuals, and not of denominations", Burke insisted; to "punish them in the lump for a presumed delinquency . . . is an act of unnatural rebellion against the legal dominion of reason and justice." Most tellingly, "this vice, in any constitution that entertains it, at one time or another will certainly bring on its ruin."

France and Revolution

IF BURKE was affectionate toward the Americans, indefatigable on India, and overwrought on Ireland, he was little short of passionate about revolution in France—and with good reason. It was on this question that he made his most lasting contribution, and secured his reputation as the quintessential anti-totalitarian. Burke's greatest achievement was that, from the beginning and at a time when it was still widely popular, he understood the essence of the French Revolution, predicted its excesses, and opposed it resolutely. He was not looking for "constructive alternatives", "higher" truths, or a positive "spin." Burke was against the Revolution because it was destructively based on abstract reasoning; this time he intuited a great deal from existing evidence, and saw like no other that the metaphysics of this revolution carried within it the seeds of terror and despotism.

Burke was so passionately against the French Revolution—there is very little here about "rational, cool endeavors" to oppose the pandemonium engulfing Paris—because he saw that the delegitimizing implications inherent in the Revolutionist cause could not be contained within the boundaries of France. Precisely because that cause purported to be based on universalist principles, it required a like response to contain and ultimately defeat it. Burke did not shrink from the task, though it required him to confront the consensual enlightened opinion of his day—including the opinion of some of his closest friends—head-on. For him, opposing the French Revolution was his era's perfect confluence of concrete interests and philosophical values. Indeed, even Woodrow Wilson wrote of Burke on this point: "What a man was, we may often discover in the records of his days of bitterness and pain better than in what is told of his seasons of cheer and hope. . . . This is the test which Burke endures—the test of fire."[3]

First and foremost, Burke attacked the French Revolution not as an embodiment of the French state, but as something new and "peculiar" in the world. In the *Second Letter on a Regicide Peace*, he characterized it as "the evil spirit that possesses the body of France . . . which inspires into them a new, a pernicious, a desolating activity." Seeing it thus, Burke saw no chance of ever making peace with the "system" created by the Revolution because it was "with the system itself that we were at war." It was

> a war between the partisans of the ancient civil, moral and political order of Europe against a

[3]Kirk, pp. 149-50.

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> sect of fanatical and ambitious atheists which means to change them all. . . . It is a sect aiming at universal empire, and beginning with the conquest of France.

Thus, quite obviously, revolution in this sense—that is, revolution committed not to righting specific wrongs but to transforming the world—necessarily takes on a completely different aspect from any prior or contemporary foreign policy matter. Indeed, Burke moved quickly to what may have seemed a surprising conclusion for him: No compromise was possible. For him, "this new system of robbery in France cannot be rendered safe by any art . . . it must be destroyed, or . . . it will destroy all Europe."

Second, Burke immediately identified the fundamentally totalitarian nature of the revolutionists, which also distinguished them from other governments. Indeed, he correctly saw that the consequences of the Revolution would be precisely the opposite of the liberating appeal of its slogans, such as "the Rights of Man." He cautioned, "You have theories enough concerning the Rights of Men. It may not be amiss to add a small degree of attention to their Nature and disposition. It is with Man in the concrete . . . you are to be concerned."

More disturbing to Burke was that "the Rights of Man" ultimately seemed to have little or nothing to do with what was really happening in France—the ever-growing power of the government over aspects of life that had never before been thought "political":

> What now stands as government in France is struck out at a heat. . . . To them the will, the wish, the want, the liberty, the toil, the blood of individuals, is as nothing. Individuality is left out of their scheme of government. The state is all in all.

Burke saw the greatest threat from this new kind of "state" as directed against the institution of property: "It is the contempt of property, and the setting up against its principle certain pretended advantages of the state (which, by the way, exists only for its conservation), that has led to all the other evils." (Burke's reduction of the key function of the "state" to a parenthetical here, I note parenthetically, should dispel any doubts about his libertarian credentials in economic policy.)

Third, Burke saw the Revolution as stemming directly from Rousseau and other "modern philosophers", the very mention of which phrase "express[es] everything that is ignoble, savage and hard-hearted." Worse than anything else, the French Revolution and its progenitors were theorists who knew so little of reality that they could not conceive of the consequences of their ideas. He described them as

> fanatics: independent of any interest, which, if it operated alone, would make them much more tractable; they are carried with such a headlong rage towards every desperate trial that they would sacrifice the whole human race to the slightest of their experiments.

Specifically, these philosophers simply did not care about people as individuals: "They consider men in their experiments no more than they do mice in an air-pump."

This utter disregard for the circumstances into which the Revolutionists' theories were to be interjected troubled Burke nearly as much as the substance of the theories themselves. He correctly saw that the disregard for circumstances would ultimately harm not the theorists, but the innocent citizens who were subjected to their will:

> Circumstances (which with some gentlemen pass for nothing) give in reality to every political principle its distinguishing colour, and discriminating effect. The circumstances are what render every civil and political scheme beneficial or noxious to mankind.

The gentlemen who were thus prepared to ignore circumstances were the idealists, the metaphysicians, in thrall to abstract principles and absolute rights. To Burke they were the

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most dangerous of men. This was a point he returned to again and again. "Nothing", he insisted, "can be conceived more hard than the heart of a thorough-bred metaphysician." He dismissed the Encyclopedists as a "flight of the magpies and jays of philosophy." He attacked the English Jacobins as "sublime metaphysicians . . . the horrible consequences produced by their speculations affect them not at all." He denounced "the greatest of all evils—a blind and furious spirit of innovation, under the name of reform." He even greatly feared "the ill consequences of keeping good principles and good general views within no bounds", although that was the least of the problems he feared from the Revolution.

BURKE'S THOUGHT covers far more territory than this brief survey can convey, and generalizing from any sampling can be dangerous. In all likelihood, too, Burke would have objected to the writing of this essay because it attempts to apply his thinking to circumstances he never envisaged, let alone lived. As it happens, though, he cannot object, and so we have proceeded with due humility.

In many respects, the difference between Burke's policy preferences concerning America, India, and Ireland on the one hand, and revolutionary France on the other, accurately define the differences within the contemporary debate among former conservative cold warriors. Although coming at the end of his career and life, the French Revolution summoned all of Burke's energy in a last, furious defense of the values and interests he had always championed. This confluence of bad theory and evil reality created a danger that summoned his greatest legacy in *Reflections on the Revolution in France*, and the letters and speeches associated with it.

Yet it was precisely his earlier analyses that suited him so well for his concluding role: his understanding of the importance of circumstances in setting policy, his emphasis on prudence and "rational, cool endeavors", and his devotion to practicality over abstraction. More than any of his contemporaries, and precisely because of his earlier experiences, Burke understood and foretold the unprecedented dangers created by the French Revolution, when most of his friends and former Whig allies saw it as a great step forward in the march of progress.

The problem many foreign policy analysts have today is that our "French Revolution" problem is over. Our anti-communism, so passionate and so blessed by a confluence of values and interests as was Burke's opposition to France in revolution, has prevailed. Instead of the bright distinctions and clear battles to fight, we now have to face the ambiguities that Burke understood so well in contexts as disparate as colonial America, imperial India, and neighboring Ireland. Unlike Burke, whose greatest challenge came at the end, we might have to acknowledge that our greatest challenge is now behind us.

Burke saw that the French Revolution required a treatment different from his earlier efforts. After all, he said, "a different state of things requires a different conduct." So, too, after the Cold War, America faces in the world "a different state of things." This is not to say with any certainty that there are no more French Revolutions left in our future. To the contrary, our experience tells us the opposite. And in such new circumstances, "a different conduct" will again be required. But we are not there yet, and those who disagree are today doing America a grave disservice. □

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Doing Well by Doing Good

Josef Joffe

Walter A. McDougall, *Promised Land, Crusader State: The American Encounter With the World Since 1776* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1997), 286 pp., $26.

Zbigniew Brzezinski, *The Grand Chessboard: American Primacy and its Geostrategic Imperatives* (New York: Basic Books, 1997), 215 pp., $26.

Richard N. Haass, *The Reluctant Sheriff: The United States After the Cold War* (New York: Council on Foreign Relations Books, 1997), 148 pp., $24.95.

IS AMERICA JUST a nation among nations or *novus ordo seclorum*? That is the ur-question, and since the days of John ("Citty upon a Hill") Winthrop in 1630, Americans have never stopped asking themselves what sets them apart from the rest. Rightly so. America *was* different then, and it still is.

First, by dint of history. America started from scratch at a time when the other powers had been around the block a few times, for several hundred years, in fact. As late-comers, Americans were bound to ask new questions: how to fit into the power game, what cards to play, or whether to play at all with those corrupt potentates they had fled to build the "New Jerusalem."

Add to this geography. None of the others could even dream of a time-out option. Not to play was to perish; only Britain, with the world's nastiest navy and a nice stretch of ocean for a border, could occasionally stay aloof. But for the young republic it made sense to believe, as Washington put it, that "our detached and distant situation invites and enables us to pursue a different course."

Practically from Day One, the United States enjoyed a surfeit of deterrence power (later multiplied by nuclear weapons) that set it apart. Tocqueville still has it right: "Placed in the center of an immense continent . . . the Union is almost as much insulated from the world as if all its frontiers were girt by the ocean." This permitted a grand strategy as different from that of France or Germany as was the Rhine from the Atlantic Ocean.

Finally, ideology. America had spun off from the Old Continent like a new planet from the sun. Neither feudalism nor royalty, neither papacy nor empire, weighed down this eager child of the Enlightenment.[1] A nation indelibly stamped by Locke and the *philosophes* would obviously look through a prism quite different from Richelieu's or Palmerston's. George III's ex-subjects believed, in Paine's words, that they would "begin the world all over again." And to the rest of the globe, they trumpeted, as did Madison, that they knew "but one code of morality for man, whether acting singly or collectively." No *raison d'état* for these folks.

In Europe, only Immanuel Kant talked that way, but he did not have much clout at the Prussian court. Over here, they fervently believed it—and rightly so. Wasn't America,

[1] On the consequences for American political thought, see the seminal book by Louis B. Hartz, *The Liberal Tradition in America: An Interpretation of American Political Thought Since the Revolution* (New York: Harcourt Brace and World, 1955).

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soon pushing aside Spaniards, Frenchmen, and Indians, the most successful polity under the sun? Wasn't that proof of divine grace? And a mandate to improve retrograde races round the world—also known as "manifest destiny"? And so President McKinley just *had* to hold on to the Philippines: "There was nothing left for us to do but to take them all, and to educate the Filipinos, and uplift and civilize and Christianize them."

Compare that to Frederick the Great's rationale for attacking Austria in 1740: His troops were "ready" and his coffers "well filled" so that "ambition, interest and my desire to be talked about" could carry the day. His was an absolutist state, and America a democracy—that was the biggest difference of them all. When the Richelieus planned their wars, they did not have to go on "Meet the Press", or testify before Congress. The national interest was what *they* said it was.

But American leaders had to slug it out with their public *ab initio*. Even before 1776, that made for passionate foreign policy debates that the late-starting democracies of Europe would only confront in the twentieth century. Hence the hoopla and hyperbole. The first official act of U.S. diplomacy, the Declaration of Independence, was one long plea before the court of the "opinions of mankind"—overargued, overwrought, and overladen with philosophical *obiter dicta*. And so it went. Until this day, such ringing rhetoric strikes foreigners as phony or corny. It is never just "We want" or "We shall." It is always some universal idea of righteousness, justice, or redemption. And no wonder: Unlike the others, America is a "creedal" democracy, one bound to imbue its oratory with a strong religious flavor (and fervor).

SO, AMERICA *is* different. But how "exceptional" should it be? These are the questions around which Walter A. McDougall's *Promised Land, Crusader State* revolves. To set up his argument, he re-slices the historical pie in a novel way. First he cuts it in two halves, and then into four pieces each. The first half he labels the "Old Testament." The four slices, from 1776 to the 1890s, are: "Liberty, or Exceptionalism", "Unilateralism, or Isolationism", "The American System, or Monroe Doctrine", "Expansionism, or Manifest Destiny." It was "all about Being and Becoming", about denying "the outside world the chance to shape America's future."

The "New Testament" has dominated the twentieth century. It "preached the doctrines of Progressive Imperialism, Wilsonianism, Containment, and Global Meliorism, or the belief that America has a responsibility to nurture democracy and economic growth around the world." The New Testament was about America *shaping* the outside world.

This book is a joy to read because, as *The Economist* rightly puts it, McDougall "combines breadth of vision with merciful brevity. He is erudite and consistently interesting." Moreover, *Promised Land, Crusader State* is a handy breviary of all those great quotes from Washington to Wilson you always need, but can never find in one place. But why this new "periodic table"; why two testaments?

Because McDougall wants to draw from history a moral for the here and now. Basically, his is a "Jewish" argument: The Old Testament had it right, and the New one, though full of nice ideas, was an unnecessary and misguided departure. The *Promised Land* phase was proper and fitting, the *Crusader State* was—and is—a perilous aberration. Washington, Hamilton, Jefferson, and Adams were the true prophets because they would venture forth only to protect the precious gift that was America's alone: liberty and democracy. The false ones were the likes of McKinley, Roosevelt (Teddy), Wilson, and Carter—moral crusaders all who went off on the wild goose chase of global reformism.

A sprightly debunker and contrarian, McDougall has no patience for those who interpret this history in terms of idealism versus realism, or isolationism versus interventionism. Isolationism never was, and idealism was just a bombastic embroidery of cold-

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blooded interest. McDougall doesn't quite reject "exceptionalism", but he peels off the lush leaves of messianism and idealism, accepting only a sparse core he calls "Liberty at home." "Foreign policy", he expounds, "existed to defend, not define, what America was." But "Liberty" hardly called for Christian meekness. It permitted, indeed, compelled internal expansion to get rid of French, Spaniards, and other undesirables in the same way as it demanded the "American System, or Monroe Doctrine" to keep them from coming back.

Which is another way of claiming that the Old Testament, like the Five Books of Moses, was a moral code for the Chosen only—and otherwise a realpolitiker's manual on how to gain and hold the Promised Land. The author nicely shows how the early Americans, in spite of their highfalutin rhetoric, played diplomatic hardball as if personally coached by Richelieu. "The American quest for independence proceeded to war and diplomacy as usual . . . nor was any new or idealistic diplomacy to be found in the process of peacemaking." Or, for that matter, in the next hundred years.

McDougall reserves particular scorn for the notion of isolationism because such a thing "never existed." Better to call it "unilateralism"—a strategy to reserve "complete freedom of action", which is precisely what the Richelieus called it: *garder les mains libres.* But if that was the American game, you wonder why these consummate realpolitikers threw themselves into America's most stupid adventure, the War of 1812—a "righteous war", as McDougall concedes.

True-blue realists would have measured the "correlation of forces" and then swallowed their pride, no matter how dented by British *hauteur.* But those Americans didn't just blather about law and the freedom of the seas; they dispatched their puny navy. If, like McDougall, you believe that ideology (or "values") does not impinge on interests, then you have to resort to the pretty lame explanation that the War was "an unhappy byproduct of the world war launched by Napoleon." Really? "Real" realists would have continued to act like that ultimate sermonizer, Jefferson—ranting and pontificating, but staying out of Europe's quarrels. Yet Madison did take the plunge, and you have to wonder whether these "realists" did not get hoisted on their own ideological petard after all.

It may not be fair to match a single chapter against a whole book such as *Empire of Liberty* by Robert W. Tucker and David C. Hendrickson (Oxford University Press, 1990). Though *Empire* is a more subtle disquisition on early American diplomacy, it does not even get an entry in McDougall's copious bibliography. In his debunking mood, he tends to overshoot and neglect that ideology isn't just a pretentious way of masking one's base motives. It is that, but also more. Ideology is a way of looking at, and interpreting, the world, which shapes assessments and action.

AND SO THERE was more to American Exceptionalism than McDougall's minimalist definition can accommodate. Just compare and contrast. No Continental power would have turned Liberty into a defining quest because freedom was rather a nightmare of Europe's kings and princes. Isolation was another no-no. Forever jostling each other across contested borders, the Europeans were condemned to act and interact in an eternal power game without respite. Nor could they fall for a Wilsonianism that would teach others to "elect good men" and make the world "safe for democracy." Goodness simply was not part of the dynastic game—not in a system where peace was but a pause between two wars.

What McDougall calls the "New Testament" was not really an aberration, let alone an abomination. The impulse to "reform (or dominate) a wicked world" was always there, an integral part of the "Old Testament." Why else would Hamilton passionately preach the tenets of power politics

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if not to bring his idealistic Founding Brethren back down to earth?[2] "Global Meliorism" just took some time to emerge from history's cocoon because a critical ingredient was missing: power.

In their first century, the United States just had enough of that ingredient to deal with outgunned Mexicans and Indians. When after the Civil War the United States began to outpace the established powers in critical growth areas such as steel and energy, burgeoning resources provided the soil on which grandiose ends could flourish. Wilhelmine Germany, also a rookie in the great power league, merely wanted a "place in the sun." But newly muscular America, true to its ideological roots, would naturally preach, and believe in its sermons, as it sought to conquer—cf. McKinley and T.R. The New Testament, rather than betraying the Old, flowed effortlessly from it once the wherewithals were in place. Tocqueville sensed this: "The foreign policy of the United States is eminently expectant; it consists more in abstaining than in acting." It helps to recall Arnold Wolfer's distinction between "possession goals" and "milieu goals."[3] The former are the usual suspects of grand strategy: land and riches, power and glory. The latter demand the "shaping of conditions beyond national boundaries." Great powers, especially "creedal" ones, want more than just secure borders. They want a world that "becomes them" in both senses of the term: that befits them, and becomes like them.

If you are capitalist and good at it, you cherish free trade and engage in "Open Door" diplomacy, later transmuted into global institutions like GATT and the IMF. If you are a child of the Enlightenment, you believe that only good (democratic) states make good foreign policy. Hence, you want to shape the domestic sources of their foreign policy. If domestic peace flows from law, you want to spread this blessing to the rest of the world; hence America's penchant for international law, and, for a while, institutions like the League of Nations and the United Nations. And if foreigners persist in their retrograde ways, we must show them the light—a good spanking included. *Le juste milieu* isn't just ideological luxury; it defines those larger vital interests that come right after the protection of one's space and system.

So the Old Testament merged naturally into the New, as great power became married to built-in milieu goals. McDougall does not like the offspring—"Progressive Imperialism" and all that. Wistfully he asks, "What became of the humble and cautious impulse that had formerly warned them that they too were flawed, that the willful accumulation of power corrupts?" He scorns "Global Meliorism" as "the least effective and . . . most arrogant of all our diplomatic traditions", scoffing even at its "two great triumphs—the Marshall Plan and the occupation of Germany and Japan." The only thing about the New Testament he endorses is "Containment" because it was based on the realistic principle that "no hegemonic behemoth dominate Europe or East Asia."

So what comes after Containment? Let's return *ad fontes*, to "Liberty at home", is the book's plea. No more crusades, which the Founding Fathers believed would "belie our ideals, violate our true interests, and sully our freedom." America does not really have to worry about milieu goals, as it has "never been more secure than it is today." Whence follows a posture one might call "muscular stay-at-homism" (in deference to McDougall's distaste for "isolationism"). His shibboleth is "healthy nationalism", meaning

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[2]For instance, in a clear swipe at the likes of Madison, Hamilton expounded during the Federal Convention in 1787 that liberty was not enough: "No Government could give us tranquillity and happiness at home, which did not possess sufficient . . . strength to make us respectable abroad."

[3]Arnold Wolfers, *Discord and Collaboration* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1965), pp. 73ff.

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that if "we have been good citizens of the world, it is because we have been good Americans." America must "remember that charity begins at home, husband the rare liberty and fragile unity our ancestors won, give thanks that our recent enemies were put in confusion." Heed the Moses of American grand strategy, George F. Kennan, who in 1985 counseled "minding our own business wherever there is not some overwhelming reason for minding the business of others."

That would be wonderful advice for a United States lodged in time somewhere between the purchase of Louisiana and the sinking of the *Lusitania*—when it was in the business of internal expansion, with an occasional "overwhelming reason" to lay low the hegemonist du jour. But those circumstances exist no more. Today, the United States does not have a time-out option. It cannot retract from the world because it is the world. How shall we count the ways? Alliances with half a dozen critical regions? In situ and over-the-horizon deployments of armed forces? Board seats in myriad international institutions? Guardianship over strategic resources like Middle Eastern oil? Defanging the nuclear ambitions of North Korea, Iran, et al.? Chairing the peace process in the Balkans and the Levant? Containing China and watching Russia? Managing global trade? Name the enterprise, and the United States has a controlling share in it.

Breathtaking Geopolitics

THE POINT IS: America is entangled not merely by dint of treacherous ambition, but by enormous power and sound interest. It does well by doing good, serving its own interests by serving those of others. This is where Zbigniew Brzezinski's *The Grand Chessboard* takes off. America's unprecedented "global power", he argues, "is exercised through a global system of distinctively American design that mirrors the domestic American experience." The game is not imposition, but "co-optation", reinforced by America's domination of the global culture, the "clout of [its] technological edge and its global military reach." The sinews of this peculiar empire derive from an "elaborate system of alliances and coalitions that literally span the globe" and a "global web of specialized organizations" such as the IMF and World Bank.

So "milieu" and "possession" goals have virtually become one and the same. What are the stakes? "Currently, this unprecedented American global hegemony has no rival", Brzezinski points out. "But will it remain unchallenged?" His First Principle is as simple as it is compelling: Number One wants to remain Number One, and so it must act to forestall hostile coalitions. From here on, Brzezinski goes McDougall's realism one better, moving straight into a kind of neo-geopolitics that echoes Haushofer, Mackinder, and Mahan. "For America", he asserts, "the chief geopolitical prize is Eurasia", another word for Mackinder's "Heartland." Rule it, Mackinder wrote, and you "command the world." Geography is destiny.

Unlike yesterday's geopoliticians, Brzezinski is not fixated on the ways and means of war. His preferred role for the United States is that of an impresario who deftly exploits his manifold and unmatched power for global management. That, too, is a virtually self-evident principle. He who pulls the strings will not be yanked about, or be felled by the slings of other nations. Those who craft coalitions or "socialize" their rivals will not be encircled by them.[4]

But how to do it? Brzezinski's reach is breathtaking. In masterly fashion, he takes the reader on a trip around the world in 200 pages (leaving out only the Middle East, where even the Zbiggest giants fear to tread). But his brilliant tour de force is like a plate of magnificent hors d'oeuvres. They stimulate the appetite and get the intellectual juices flowing, but don't quite fill one up.

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[4]I have argued this point in "How America Does It", *Foreign Affairs* (September/October 1997).

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In part, that derives from the sheer scope of the book, which, given its brevity, must work with broad brush strokes. On the other hand, Brzezinski is too subtle a thinker to slip out of difficult problems with glib answers. And so the discourse sometimes turns too subtle, too nuanced and fraught with conditionals, especially when it comes to operational guidance.

Take Europe, "America's essential geopolitical bridgehead on the Eurasian continent." When he writes off "self-marginalized" Britain and the "special relationship", the policy advice is straightforward enough (though not compelling because Britain has always been America's sturdiest *point d'appui*). Go with France and Germany, "Europe's principal architects", he advises. A "breakdown of Franco-German cooperation would be a fatal setback for Europe and a disaster for America's position in Europe." Really? France has always been trying to organize a Europe that would contain and contest the United States.

Why, then, go for "some progressive accommodation to the French view" on the "distribution of power" in the Atlantic Alliance? Because united Germany, the weightier of the two, might be tempted by a "more nationalist concept of the European 'order'", and there goes America's "Eurasian bridgehead." Ergo, the United States should strengthen France as Western anchor of Germany. Fair enough, but why does Brzezinski also counsel an "energetic, focused and determined American involvement, particularly with the Germans"? This may be too subtle, too "Bismarckian" a policy for the United States to sustain. And what for, unless to play one against the other—which can hardly serve the "cause of European unification" Brzezinski favors.

A particularly intriguing chapter is "The Eurasian Balkans." It lifts the curtain on an area that has been *terra incognita* on America's map. This is the vast swathe of countries between Turkey, Iran, Russia, and China that was liberated by the collapse of the Soviet empire—all those "Stans" from "Turkmen" to "Kazak" and "Afghan", plus Armenians, Azeris, and Georgians. "This region is not only a power vacuum but is also internally unstable." Add to this ethnic strife, an enormous *richesse* of oil and gas, and the covetous gaze of the surrounding powers, and you have a twenty-first century XXL version of the Balkans.

Brzezinski is right to sound the warning bell. This is where history has not ended, where it might return with a vengeance. America's interest is also plain: While "too distant to be dominant", it is also "too powerful not to be engaged." What follows? Though Brzezinski seems none too fond of the Brits, he talks pure Palmerston: The United States must ensure that "no single power comes to control this geopolitical space and that the global community has unhindered financial and economic access to it." Right again, but how? Oppose "Russian efforts to monopolize access." But there is always a "but." And so, "the exclusion of Russia . . . is neither desirable nor feasible."

The Grand Chessboard is a fascinating book, and a disturbing one in the best sense of the term. It was designed to jar and jolt the mind at a moment when America, witnessing the triumph of its deepest values, is again being drawn to "global meliorism." Righteousness rules, and the environment, child labor, or human rights dominates the agenda. Or, with a rougher edge, teaching the Europeans the virtue of a "closed door" approach to Cuba.

Brzezinski means to say: "It's geography and power, stupid", and that is good advice for a country weaned on the less-than-universal conviction that global harmony comes from a planet full of Kantian republics. But an "on the other hand" is in order. Democracies don't like realpolitik, the descendants of Madison least of all. It requires a sense of *raison d'état*, which, in turn, demands a strong sense of nationhood. The former was never too firmly fixed in the American mind, and the latter may be going the way of the rotary

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phone in all the advanced democracies. Deconstructive ethnic politics plus the pursuit of *individual* happiness do not add up to a National Interest. Nor may geopolitics capture the essence of twenty-first century global politics. "Possession goals" are paling at a time when welfare edges out warfare—not only in the West, but also, fitfully, in Moscow and Beijing.

Geopolitics, though it jogs the mind in an entirely salutary fashion, seems like the pale copy of yesterday's real thing, at least in the Berlin-Berkeley Belt. The problem is that we need a "two paradigm" grand strategy. One would apply to the non-zero sum, welfarist and democratist game that is being played out in the West (including Japan and would-be Westerners), the other to the zero-sum, "I want what you can't have" game that tortures the Middle East, and might yet erupt in the "Eurasian Balkans" and the Western Pacific.

The Gary Cooper Problem

IN *The Reluctant Sheriff*, Richard Haass attempts to bridge these two paradigms, while paying a great deal more attention to the domestics of foreign policy than does Brzezinski. The United States, Haass argues along classical realist lines, should make sure that others are "less likely or able to act aggressively." But it is "realism-plus" (or "idealism-minus"). The inhibition of aggression must also work inside countries, to the benefit of its own citizens. The third objective is "mutually beneficial economic arrangements" as well as "multilateral norms" and "institutions." The key is "regulation", with the United States acting the "sheriff." Lacking the authority and clout of a policeman, it must "work with others" and choose carefully where and when to intervene.

It is the difference between "primacy", which the United States has, and "hegemony", which it does not. America can do what nobody else can—from Bosnia to the Gulf. But it "cannot compel others to become more democratic." Nor "can it intervene with military force everywhere" or dictate another country's foreign policy. Haass' basic metaphor is neither the "chessboard" nor the "Promised Land", but the market. This is the age of deregulation everywhere, he argues—in the realm of products, capital, and information as well as in the arena of power. The highly regulated market of the Cold War, a.k.a. bipolarity, is gone, former subsidiaries have spun off, and many more players are taking advantage of easier access to bring their unique assets (from trade to terror) into the competition.

What is the American market leader to do? Neither too much, nor too little—that is the one-sentence gist of this intelligent and well-crafted little book. Haass does not pursue a single moral like McDougall, or a single image of world politics, as does Brzezinski. His advice is to be economical about means as well as ends. Hence, "Something must be doable as well as desirable", which is hard to gainsay. He argues against a minimalist (i.e. neo-isolationist) foreign policy because "neglect will prove to be malign." He quickly disposes of "hegemony" or "unipolarity" because "such a goal is beyond our reach." He dislikes "Wilsonianism" because it does not address the question of what to do before goodness triumphs. Terrorism, proliferation, and humanitarian disasters are *now*; hence democracy, though laudable, provides no guide for tackling today's crisis. Nor is economism, "muscular trade promotion", such a smart Clintonite idea, since it is "likely to harm the overall bilateral relationship with the country in question." Right again.

The motto is "regulation", which transcends traditional realism's focus on the *external* behavior of states. Echoing *Ecclesiastes*, Haass believes that there is a time for everything, including promoting democracy and human rights. But in each case, the strategy must be like Gary Cooper's in *High Noon*: trying to organize a posse of the willing, as the United States did so successfully in the Gulf and in Bosnia. This is an eminently reasonable proposal because it combines U.S. lead-

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ership with the benefits of synergy. In fact, the "posse" is but an elegant shorthand for U.S. practice since the collapse of the Berlin Wall. Nor could it have been anything else. Formal alliances such as NATO are good for only one thing: defense against an attack. They rarely work as "pro-active" tools. Another advantage of the posse is that the use of force these days requires international legitimation—ideally by the UN, at a minimum by a regional body like NATO. Whether that is also economical, as Haass thinks, is not so clear. It was not the French or Egyptians who dispatched half a million troops to the Gulf.

Like any "collective security" scheme, the notion of the posse poses a deadly problem, as Gary Cooper learned. These folks may not show up when you need them most. Shared interests alone don't propel them to the sheriff's side. They must believe that he is big enough to win, and they must fear his ire more than the risk of commitment. This is precisely why the Gulf operation worked. The United States fielded a force ten times larger than the next-biggest contributor, and nobody, not even the meek-minded Germans and Japanese, dared avert his gaze when the hat was passed.

The moral of the Gulf story transcends McDougall's "Liberty at home." The strong cannot hide. Those who must lead must also shoulder a disproportionate burden, and synergy is nil when there is no energy in the first place. Both Brzezinski and Haass believe that the generator can only be America. They are right. But they still have to deal with McDougall's 222-page interjection that America, this "delightsome spot", does not have to play the game, as it has "never been more secure than it is today." True enough, Haass concedes—we can only do what we must "if we build support at home." Without such an effort to "explain why foreign policy still matters and why we cannot afford to ignore it, the domestic foundations on which national security inevitably rests will crumble." But with that exhortation, alas, the book ends. □

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Stalin, An Incompetent Realist

Robert Jervis

John Lewis Gaddis, *We Now Know: Rethinking Cold War History* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), 425 pp., $30.

Vojtech Mastny, *The Cold War and Soviet Insecurity: The Stalin Years* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), 285 pp., $30.

Vladislav Zubok and Constantine Pleshakov, *Inside the Kremlin's Cold War: From Stalin to Khrushchev* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1996), 346 pp., $29.95.

CHANGES IN historical accounts are driven mainly by developments, if not fashions, within the historical profession, by current political concerns, by the availability of new sources of information, and by the way in which the events being explored turned out. Although the first two factors are not to be dismissed, I believe the second two are of greater importance in our current efforts to understand the Cold War. Most obviously, recent years have seen the release of major documents from Russia's archives, and the rise of a new generation of Russian historians to help analyze them. In some cases

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these documents have at least temporarily settled previous debates and in others have surprised us all—the most obvious example of the latter being the revelation that the Soviets deployed large ground forces armed with tactical nuclear weapons to Cuba in 1962. But although these gifts are certainly welcome, they have been limited in number and quality, and it appears that much of what we would like to know was never written down. Indeed, even if all documents were open (and none had been destroyed), there would still be much to argue about, just as we still argue about the causes of the First World War.

Archives can never fully answer questions about human motivation or fully elucidate the sincerity, let alone the sources, of the beliefs expressed. Nor can they tell us how each state would have behaved if others had acted differently, in part because people often do not know how they will respond to a situation until it arises. Archival research alone can provide no magic bullet, no sudden revelation that explains all.

Perhaps, then, it is not surprising that the way the Cold War ended has had at least as strong an influence on how we interpret its origins and course as have the new documents. More specifically, the close temporal association between this epoch and the rise and fall of the Soviet Union makes salient the connections between domestic and foreign policy. Marxists are not alone in stressing that the wellsprings of a state's foreign policy almost always come from its domestic social, economic, and political systems, a perspective that has been reinforced by the recent arguments that, just as idealists have long claimed, democracies have many singular virtues. Unlike every other political system, they rarely fight each other and seem to do a better job of dealing with disputes among themselves.

This perspective is shared by all three of the books under review, but is most central to that of John Lewis Gaddis. I think he is right. Stalin said as the Second World War drew to a close, "This war is not as in the past. Whoever occupies a territory also imposes his own social system." But Stalin did not get it quite right, and his lack of understanding is crucial both to our moral judgments about the Cold War and to the course it took: the immediate postwar occupation period excepted, the United States did not have to impose its system on others, but Stalin's USSR did. Although Gaddis and others have been accused of "triumphalism" for believing that the West won the Cold War because of the ethical and practical superiority of its values, societies, and politics, I think that this view is nevertheless correct, and can be maintained without denying the many faults of democracies in general and of the United States in particular. Estimates of the differing levels of effectiveness of the Soviet and Western systems have led Vojtech Mastny to conclude that the outcome of the Cold War was largely decided by 1949, and Gaddis to say this was the case by the end of the Cuban missile crisis. While these seem overstatements, they do correctly stress the importance of the differences between the essential characteristics of the Soviet and American empires.

This view supplements, if it does not contradict, the standard geostrategic argument that, to use Raymond Aron's phrase, the United States and USSR were "enemies by position." There is much to this bipolar perspective. Because these two countries were the only ones strong enough to menace each other, it was almost certain that they would eye each other with suspicion. But would there have been a Cold War had the USSR been a democracy? Although the United States and Britain were suspicious of each other's postwar objectives and clashed over the future of the British Empire, it is hard to imagine their contemplating war with each other, even had they not faced a common Soviet threat. It is also not likely to have been an accident that the Cold War ended with the demise of European communism.

It has long been understood that vital to the course of the Cold War were the facts that West Germany and Japan not only recovered economically but did not resume

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their expansionist ways, and that they and the United States were able to deal with their subsequent conflicts with a minimum of friction. But only more recently have analysts stressed that it was the democratic habits of compromise and heeding the legitimate interests of others that gave the Western alliance its enormous resilience (see Thomas Risse-Kappen's 1995 *Cooperation Among Democracies*). The situation was very different on the communist side, and this had profound and widespread implications. As Gaddis notes, our focus on the superpowers led us to underestimate the power of others: "The difficulty of managing any empire is bound to vary [according to whether its subjects collaborate or resist]; but it is the *occupied*, not the occupiers who make this choice."

Although the contrast here flared to its extremes only in isolated incidents such as the East German uprising of 1953, the Hungarian Revolution of 1956, the Prague Spring of 1968, and the ultimate overthrow of communism—if not the Communists—during 1989-90, it was important throughout the Cold War. This is not the way Soviet leaders thought relations among allies on either side would develop. All the authors show convincingly that the conventional image of Stalin as the quintessential realist is inaccurate. His ideological beliefs generated two hopes that were the pillars of his immediate postwar policy and that, ironically, led him to act in ways that brought these pillars down.

The first of these hopes was that war among the capitalist countries was inevitable. Not only did he not feel obliged to worry about a united opposition to Soviet ambitions, but he believed he could expand with special ease where American and British interests clashed, as in Iran and Turkey. The truth, of course, was that the Western countries would not have fought each other in any event, and, in fact, it was Stalin's own threatening behavior that did much to falsify his assumption that the Western countries could not unite against him.

Second, and more interestingly, it now appears that Stalin hoped both that communist rule would be welcomed in Eastern Europe, and that the Soviet system would have great appeal in the West. He might have been right had he not behaved so brutally. Here, as Gaddis stresses, the enormous contradiction in Stalin's behavior was epitomized by what happened in East Germany. While he expected rapid economic regeneration and sufficient popular support to make the regime not only stable but a magnet for the Western zones, he permitted his troops to pillage and rape the Eastern zone for several years.[1] When Stalin found, much to his surprise, that indigenous support was lacking, he responded the only way he knew how, by repression. One of Mastny's major themes is that it was the failure to gain popular consent, even more than the growing Cold War with the United States, that led Stalin to consolidate his hold over Eastern Europe. The irony, of course, is that while these actions increased his security in the short run, they also increased Western fear, solidified the image of the USSR as a grave menace, and diminished the appeal of communism in the West. (Mastny also shows that American attempts to undermine Soviet control of Eastern Europe, although ineffective, reinforced Stalin's drive to eliminate all opposition. But much about these efforts remains hidden by the American refusal to declassify the relevant documents.) While American analysts later came to fear the "Finlandization" of Western Europe, it is now clear that only if Stalin had been able to "Finlandize" Eastern Europe—that is, make it strategically harmless without satellizing it—would the USSR have been secure.

But of course that would have required communism to be a different system, or at least Stalin to have been a different person. It

[1]Gaddis and others draw on the path-breaking work of Norman Naimark, *The Russians in Germany: A History of the Soviet Zone of Occupation, 1945-1949* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1995).

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is as beyond dispute as anything can be in history that, more than any other individual, Stalin is central to the origins of the Cold War. Abroad as at home, he was driven by greed and fear, both taken to extremes, and would brook no opposition. He could not be secure as long as there were any enemies around, he saw enemies everywhere, and his behavior created them if they did not already exist. As Henry Kissinger observed in *A World Restored*, revolutionary regimes tend to be dangerous not so much because of their need to expand, but because nothing can make them feel secure—and all the authors at hand agree that Stalin did indeed consider himself a revolutionary.

Like many others of this type, Stalin was imbued with a faith that led him to misread his environment and to learn slowly, if at all, from experience. Although concerted Western pressure could and did lead him to accept restraints, excessive optimism led to unwise adventures, most notably when he authorized Kim Il Sung to attack South Korea. (Diplomatic documents do answer some questions: in this case they make clear that Stalin, with Mao's acquiescence, authorized the attack after having initially resisted. The explanation for the turnabout appears to be the renewed faith in the prospects of communism that was generated by the unexpected success of the Chinese Revolution.) Of course, democracies are not immune to crusading impulses and excessive optimism, but they usually do a better job of understanding their situation because they have no choice but to hear diverse opinions, and are far more likely to be punished for failures. As Mastny asserts, "Such blunders as the Berlin Blockade or the row with Tito would have been sufficient for Stalin to be sacked if he had been the head of a responsible government."

A RECURRING QUESTION of intrinsic interest, and one that is a partial surrogate for the broad considerations of responsibility for the Cold War, is whether there were any "missed opportunities" to reduce conflict. As long as Stalin was alive, the answer is almost certainly no. Although Vladislav Zubok and Constantine Pleshakov implausibly imply that relations might have been better had the United States not dropped atomic bombs on Japan, most recent scholarship confirms William Taubman's analysis that Stalin's combination of fear, hope, and hostility (to which the authors here would add incompetence) precluded his responding to Western conciliation.[2] Would greater pressure have worked better? Mastny thinks it might have, especially in the months before Stalin's death. But Mastny also shows that Stalin was so ill that significant change was unlikely. Furthermore, a more confrontational policy might have undermined the domestic consensus and allied unity of purpose that were such valuable resources to the West throughout the Cold War.

It would have been hard for the West to have capitalized on Beria's apparent willingness to sacrifice East Germany after Stalin's death because of the general lack of confidence within the Soviet leadership, if for no other reason. Zubok and Pleshakov suggest there was a greater glimmer of hope in supporting Malenkov's 1954 initiatives based on his understanding—not yet shared by his colleagues—of the destructiveness of the thermonuclear weapons that both sides were developing. But here too it is far from clear that a favorable American response would have solidified Malenkov's power. In the following years, Khrushchev's exuberance and desire to nudge history along its path to communism would have made acceptable agreements difficult to reach. The heterogeneous coalition that supported him also reduced his ability to sustain any policy of détente that would yield the sort of changes in the status quo that would have been acceptable to the West. More generally, fundamental agreements were impossible until the Soviet Union saw that a unified but demilitarized and neu-

[2]William Taubman, *Stalin's American Policy* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1982).

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tral Germany would be more dangerous than the status quo, and until the United States became willing to ensure that West Germany did not gain access to nuclear weapons.

Yet it seems unlikely that there were no missed opportunities for forty-five years. Unless one is the sort of economist who believes that whatever happens must be maximally efficient, it is implausible that there were no alternative courses of action that could have benefited both sides. Indeed, Deborah Larson, in *The Anatomy of Mistrust* (Cornell University Press, 1997), has isolated several intriguing candidates. Ironically, one reason why American leaders were hesitant to test the possibilities was that they underestimated domestic and allied steadfastness and thus feared that they would be constrained in returning to a policy of firmness if conciliation failed. Since the Cold War ended largely on the basis of internal changes within the Soviet Union, it can be argued that this reticence was most unfortunate. But unless it was an accident that the Cold War ended only when the Soviet regime democratized, the key question is how far earlier détentes could have proceeded in the absence of fundamental domestic change, and whether they would have produced or inhibited such a transformation. One thing is certain: the archives are powerless to answer the question.

NONE OF WHAT is in these books anywhere approaches the last word in the writing of Cold War history. Gaddis' title—*We Now Know*—should not be misread. As he explains, the emphasis belongs at least as much on the second word as the third. The same forces for change that have produced these books will produce successors with different perspectives. For example, consistent with the most recent scholarship available at the time, Gaddis argues that Khrushchev put missiles in Cuba largely out of his "revolutionary romanticism", which led him to seek to protect an endangered communist regime that might succeed in spreading communism to the rest of Latin America, as well as to partially close the missile gap with the United States. (It has been clear for a number of years that Soviet concerns about Cuba's safety after the Bay of Pigs, although perhaps exaggerated, were not fantasies.)

But even more recent analyses rehabilitate one of the older explanations for Khrushchev's gambit: that the missiles would permit him to increase greatly his pressure on West Berlin.[3] Conventional wisdom has it that popular participation and pluralism render democracies fickle toward both friends and adversaries, and incapable of subtlety, consistency, and moderation. But although one major contribution of these three histories is to show that the perspectives of contemporary actors are often warped by habits, self-image, and self-interest, in fact in this case these actors often got the story right. Perhaps the foreign policy skills of the democracies are not so bad after all. □

[3]Ernest May and Philip Zelikow, eds., *The Kennedy Tapes: Inside the White House During the Cuban Missile Crisis* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1997); see also Aleksandr Fursenko and Timothy Naftali, *"One Hell of a Gamble": Khrushchev, Castro, and Kennedy, 1958-1964* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1997).

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On the Art of War

John Keegan

Peter Paret, *Imagined Battles: Reflections of War in European Art* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1997), 125 pp., $34.95.

PETER PARET, professor emeritus of history at the Institute for Advanced Studies in Princeton, New Jersey, is best known as the translator of Clausewitz and for a series of commentaries on the Prussian military thinker's work. He is also, however, a distinguished art historian and in this book he combines his interest in war with that in European painting. He is particularly interested in "the basic fact of war: the individual confronting the reality of killing and being killed", and hopes to uncover in the images he has chosen to analyze certain truths about combat that the written historical record does not and perhaps cannot reveal to us.

The principal images on which he has chosen to meditate range from the mid-fifteenth to the early twentieth century. Some are well known, some not, but all connect with one another through the depiction of battle or its consequences. The first and least familiar, *Swiss Man-at-Arms under an Architectural Arch*, a 1507 drawing by the Swiss artist Niklaus Manuel, exemplifies the author's method and intentions. After a detailed description of the work and its historical context, Paret proceeds to ask a series of questions: Was Manuel an eyewitness of the event depicted (in this case the siege of Genoa by a Franco-Swiss army in 1507)? Was it his intention to represent the reality of a sixteenth-century siege or did he have some other purpose? If so, what purpose might that have been? He had, Professor Paret concludes, several purposes. First, as a man of the Renaissance, he certainly wanted to represent contemporary war and those who took part in it in as realistic a way as possible. The contrast is with late-medieval stylism, as exemplified in another contemporary depiction of the siege by Diebold Schilling the Younger, which makes no attempt to individualize the combatants or to offer a realistic topographical setting for their actions. Schilling's picture might be that of any bloody episode at any fortified place. Manuel's has the quality of reportage.

But was it a visual report? Probably not; the artist was later a soldier but in 1507 had not yet gone to war. Nevertheless, he had considerable knowledge of military operations, as all young Swiss males of the period—that warlike, mercenary race—would have had, and he also had a straightforward view of the place of war in Swiss life. Sixteenth-century Switzerland "expected its young men to go to war", because war had served the federation's political and economic interests for a century and more. Manuel accepts that reality. His real artistic purpose, however, is to convey another reality: that war is bloody business in which the survival of the individual is a matter of chance. His halberdier in the drawing has survived but, as his slightly quizzical expression implies, he knows that he might not have done so. Collectively, the Swiss were doing well out of war. But its males paid a high price for the state's policy of hiring them out to the highest bidder.

In this opening chapter, Paret reveals his interests. War art is for him both a source of information and of attitude, and the function of the art historian in the analysis of the material, as he sees it, is not only to make a judgment about an image's realism but also to assess the extent to which depiction of reality

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has been subordinated to the artist's feeling about the role of war in human life. The conjunction—or disjunction—between depiction and sentiment clearly appears in the next work the author considers, Uccello's *Unhorsing of Bernardino della Carda* (1435-40), from the Uffizi. Uccello is known even to laymen for his famous *Battle of San Romano*, but this is because that picture is always cited in art history courses as the first important example of the technique of perspective in European painting. Paret is interested in the *Unhorsing* not for technical but for conceptual reasons. In it, he argues, Uccello does achieve a fair level of realistic representation—the military detail is right—but is really painting an allegory: The great men who personify war's adversarial essence can also be brought low by the conflict of which they are the instigators and directors. "Sceptre and crown / shall tumble down / And in the dust be equal made / With the poor crooked scythe and spade."

The message of Jacques Callot's *Large Miseries of War* is altogether easier to interpret. The series of engravings, published in 1633, depicts the horrors of the Thirty Years' War in his native Lorraine. They show not only the atrocities committed by the soldiers against the civilian population—rape, murder, and pillage—but the revenge taken by populations on the soldiers when the chance offered. The Thirty Years' War was the worst waged in Europe until the Second World War, and in some respects was more brutal in its local effects, since the armies were less disciplined. The breakdown of discipline is really Callot's theme. Paret argues that a major purpose of the artist was to depict the nature of the ordinary soldier's everyday life, and in that sense Callot is a genre artist. The effect of the series in its entirety, however, is, Paret suggests, to indicate how closely war is allied to crime and how easily the soldier, when not subjected to the strictest discipline, lapses into criminality. There is a law of unintended consequences to war, he seems to be arguing, which defies the power of those who wage war to contain, however strict its strategic or political purpose may seem to be. The same point is made in a work of high art, Rubens' *The Consequences of War* of 1638, now in the Pitti Palace, though there the subject is rendered in entirely allegorical form.

Allegory was the central purpose of the next of the author's examples, Benjamin West's famous *Death of General Wolfe* at the Battle of Quebec in 1759. It was painted to make the artist's reputation, which it succeeded in doing through West's bold decision to adapt the tradition of the *pietà* picture—the deposition of the dead Christ from the cross—

A la fin ces Voleurs infames et perdus
Comme fruits malheureux a cet arbre pendus
Monstrent bien que le crime (horrible et noire engeance)
Est luy mesme instrument de honte et de vengeance,
Et que c'est le Dessin des hommes vicieux
Desprouuer tost ou tard la iustice des Cieux.

Jacques Callot, *The Hanging*, from the series *Les Grandes Misères de la Guerre*, 1633.
The Art Museum, Princeton University. Bequest of Junius S. Morgan. Photo: Clem Fiori.

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to a secular subject. Despite the shock it caused to the sensibilities of the devout, the picture became enormously popular from its first exhibition in Britain in 1770; it set a fashion and was widely imitated. Singleton Copley, another American, almost exactly replicated West's treatment of Wolfe in *The Death of Major Pierson*, a grander picture though of a less famous subject. Pathos as a mood also found its way into studies of the humble in the ranks. Professor Paret provides numbers of examples of late eighteenth and early nineteenth-century scenes of soldiers and their wives as objects of pity, a new emotion for the military artist.

A new *style* was the academic. During the nineteenth century, battle became a favored subject for a large group of artists, particularly French and German, of whom the best known were Meissonier, Neuville, and Détaille. Détaille and Meissonier were most interested in the exact depiction of uniform, but Neuville had a real gift for the realistic representation of combat within the academic manner. Professor Paret, too, takes trouble with uniform. One of the most impressive features of his text is his exact identification of the regiments shown in some of the popular prints he has chosen to illustrate this topic.

The First World War precipitated a retreat from the academic manner by war artists, and not surprisingly so. Those who persisted in it—Caton Woodville and Alma Tadema are two obvious examples—merely came to look foolish. What replaced it, the author suggests, had already been anticipated in the work of the Futurists and Expressionists and, to illustrate the influence of their vision

Otto Dix, *Machine-gun Section Advancing*, 1924, etching, 24.1 x 28.9.
The David and Alfred Smart Museum of Art, The University of Chicago; Marcia and Granvil Specks Collection.
(Photograph © The David and Alfred Smart Museum of Art, The University of Chicago).

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on the way the war of the trenches was rendered in artistic form, he chooses *Machine-gun Section Advancing* by Otto Dix. Dix had actually commanded a machine-gun section, but the mixture of realism and symbolism—symbolic disgust with war—that infuses his picture scandalized even Weimar Germany. It was alleged to have brought the German army into disrepute and to have besmirched the trench survivors.

WHAT CONCLUSION Professor Paret comes to at the end of his immensely erudite examination of the images he has chosen to illustrate his theme is difficult to isolate. His key sentence seems to be one that runs, "The realism that matters is not on paper or canvas, but the realism in the artist's head." Here he seems to reverse the stated intention with which he began, where he makes the identification of what is true-to-life more important than what is true to the artist's feelings.

Yet perhaps we should not be surprised that he performs this backward somersault. There is a connection between Paret the art historian and Paret the interpreter of Clausewitz. Clausewitz, though claiming to be a realist and certainly having been a front-line soldier, approached his great study of war with overpowering preconceptions. Whole categories of war were deemed irrelevant to an understanding of its essential nature. War, for Clausewitz, was an affair of states, their peoples, and their armies. The war of pre-state peoples, such as the Mongols, world-conquering though they were, interested him not at all. One suspects that the war of post-state groupings, which has come to trouble the modern world so much, would not have interested him either. He had conceived war as an allegory, an allegory of politics in another form, and he used his considerable skill as a polemicist to render as much of war's reality as he thought useful to his purpose into allegorical form.

Unfortunately, Clausewitz's allegory caught on, with results that have bedeviled clear thinking about war to this day. It is only in recent years that a new school of military analysts who really do cherish reality above preconception has begun to pick away at the reportage of war to reveal what is essential to know about it. It is a pity that Professor Paret did not adopt that approach to the images he has chosen as the subject matter of this book. Buried somewhere in the enormous iconography of war is information, particularly about the remoter past, not to be retrieved from any other source. It remains largely unanalyzed. One had hoped that Professor John Hale, author of *Artists and Warfare in the Renaissance* (1990), would have adopted the analytic approach in that book, which Professor Paret rightly acclaims as an important work of art history and acknowledges as an influence on his own work. But Hale's book, admirable as it is, remains art history, of which there is a great deal, when it might have been something else—an explanation of war through its contemporary iconography, of which there is very little. One is obliged to feel that Professor Paret has also missed his chance. Beautiful and interesting though *Imagined Battles* is, it is indeed about war in the imagination, not in reality. □

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Being Blunt

Midge Decter

John Banville, *The Untouchable* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1997), 354 pp., $25.

ON THE COPYRIGHT page of John Banville's *The Untouchable*, its American publisher provides the requisite "Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data" as follows: "Espionage, Soviet—Great Britain—History—Twentieth century—Fiction." The book is a novel, one of several by Mr. Banville, and yet as Knopf's classification suggests (and as it seems, in keeping with the literary rage these days), it is not to be taken as a novel only. For the book purports to be a first-person memoir by an aging gentleman who is beyond any doubt the late Anthony Blunt, prestigious British art historian, familiar at Windsor Castle, one-time official of the British counter-intelligence service, receiver of a knighthood, pederast, and Soviet spy.

In the novel, Blunt's name is Victor Maskell, and to be sure, some elements of his story are fictional. Maskell is, for instance, Irish. He marries and fathers two children, which as far as the world knows Blunt never did, and he provides an account of his homosexual deflowering, so to speak, followed by various sordid sexual escapades that are, as applied to the real Blunt, not necessarily unconvincing yet merely suppositious. But for the rest, Banville is at little pains to disguise who his hero and his hero's friends and associates are intended to be, particularly Guy Burgess and Donald Maclean, who along with Kim Philby and, many years later, Blunt himself, were to be exposed as having been longtime Soviet espionage agents.

The fact about this particular spy ring that proved so helpfully chastening to some and deeply disconcerting to others—and hence the subject of much speculation and innumerable fascinating books—is that these particular spies, most especially Guy Burgess, had in the first place been able to achieve high positions in British intelligence circles. For, given their taste for drunken dissipation, they might never have made it into positions of trust, and once there might have been far more readily caught, had it not been for the fact that as Cambridge men—gentlemen who, however dissolute and scandalous, maintained their connection to the best circles—they were automatically granted enormous latitude by the establishment. They were not even "vetted"—a process known to Americans as security clearance. (In the United States something of a parallel to this treatment was given to Alger Hiss. But whereas Burgess, Maclean, and Philby made some contribution to British mental health by running off to the Soviet Union when they knew they had been exposed, Hiss insisted on his innocence until the day of his death, thereby making it possible for a certain number of Americans to remain in a continuing state of almost psychotic denial.)

In writing a *roman à clef* about Blunt and Co., of course, John Banville has engaged in speculation of a very different kind from that of the historians and experts—of whose work, he tells us in his section of acknowledgments, he has in fact read very little. Nevertheless, it is in the nature of such a book that its author is required to remain closely tied to the recognizability of his characters. Victor Maskell's art-historical specialty, to cite just a simple example, happens, like Blunt's, to be the work of Poussin; a fellow spy named Boy, a bad smelling drunk and homosexual adventurer, is

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instantly understood to be Guy Burgess; the troubled and ever-unpleasant novelist engaged in the effort to juggle communism with the Catholic Church can be no other than Graham Greene; in Cambridge, where Maskell is a fellow of Trinity College, many of the main characters are members of a group of fashionable 1930s communists known in fact, and also in this fiction, as the Apostles; and so on. But it is also in the nature of the genre that if its practitioner must be tied to historical fact, he is, in accordance with the fiction that he is writing fiction, allowed a freedom of assertion about his characters' feelings and inner motives that is not available to historians or responsible journalists. In Banville's case, this is a freedom put to rather curious use.

When the book opens, the Blunt character is an elderly man. It has only recently been openly acknowledged by the government that he had long been a Soviet agent, as a consequence of which he has been stripped both of his knighthood and honorary doctorate from Cambridge, and the board of the distinguished art foundation where he has for years been serving as director has asked for his resignation. He is both bewildered and indignant over this reaction to his past in what he calls a "nation of traitors, who daily betray friends, wives, children, tax inspectors." He is doing his best to avoid the press but, for some reason he cannot explain to himself, he has agreed to be interviewed by a young woman who wishes to write a book about him. And it is ostensibly for her sake that he undertakes the *apologia pro vita sua* that is this novel.

In the life of Victor Maskell as told by Banville, being a Soviet agent is an experience of little account, either intellectually or emotionally. As a young radical of a largely 1930s-style romantic kind (who confesses that he prefers Bakunin to Marx), he hangs out with his fellow Apostles, getting fashionably drunk and agonizing over the Spanish Civil War. They are all convinced that fascism will soon overtake Europe and argue about whether Uncle Joe in Moscow, with so many of his own local troubles, will be able to save them. Not suited by temperament for the grand heroic gesture, Maskell once ventures to Spain and quickly returns home. Unlike some of his friends, he has no great admiration for Stalin, nor, deep down, can he help regarding activism—the kind of marching and attending strike meetings so dramatically engaged in by Boy and others, for instance—as crass. He is envious of the energy involved in being an activist but at the same time is too fastidious to have any real regard for the act of turning theory into action. How, then, by 1936, does he get himself recruited for Soviet spydom?

The novel's answer to this question, like its hero's character in general, is more than a little dodgy. Technically, his recruitment takes place one summer afternoon in the fellows' garden of Trinity, where he has been introduced by a communist friend to someone who is obviously a Soviet handler. The conversation mainly consists of his mouthing Party pieties about art and the role of the artist that he does not believe and that the recruiter, a clever and subtle man named Hartmann, knows he does not believe. "So when Hartmann looked at me that day", Blunt-Maskell says, ". . . as the Falangist guns were firing five hundred miles to the south of us, he saw that I was exactly what was required: . . . a casuist who would split an ideological hair to an infinitesimal extreme of thinness—in other words, a man in need of faith." A sufficient reassurance for a clever *apparatchik* like Hartmann, perhaps, but hardly a persuasive account for the reader of something on which to hang this fussy and snobbish man's very destiny. Soon after, he is brought to the Soviet Union and finds both the country and its officialdom not much to his taste. Thus the mystery deepens.

What the book does succeed in suggesting—though this sometimes seems unintentional on Banville's part—is a certain relation between his protagonist's treason and his homosexuality. It is nowadays hard to remember that in the time of the Apostles and for a long while after—the years, indeed, of most

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if not all of Anthony Blunt's active life—homosexuality was still a crime. In the circle of his friends and associates, to be sure, his and others' sexual predilection was a wide-open secret, but a secret nonetheless. And about the world of what might be called the upper crust of British homosexual life in the pre-"gay rights" years, *The Untouchable* provides a far more vivid and persuasive picture than it does of the experience of being a Soviet agent. The double life of Maskell-Blunt that the reader comes to know is a life of simultaneous high dignity and sordid debauchery, from Windsor Castle and his association there with the Queen (whom he calls "Mrs. W.") to such low adventures as a drunken quest to find a brothel that specializes in providing its clientele with the services of children. This is the aspect of the fictional Blunt's existence that Banville is able to make vivid and believable, while what has to be the experience of any highly placed spy—the secret meetings, the taking of orders, the unending slyness with one's associates, the surely at least sometime night-sweat fear of getting caught—is essentially absent from his account.

It is the problem of those who set out to make fictions of real people that if they do not render the real people persuasively, their fictional characters flounder. Thus, if Blunt is not fully in these pages, then Maskell is not either. It would perhaps have been a somewhat complicated matter to persuade the reader of the necessary connection between the homosexuality of Blunt's circle and their predilection for favoring the triumph, of all places, of the Soviet Union, a society more hostile to homosexuality than that of the stuffiest of Victorians. But novels are after all *about* complication, and Banville seems oddly reluctant to fulfill this part of his responsibility to the real Anthony Blunt.

Blunt and his university-bred communist associates, most particularly the homosexuals among them, could never have been so much moved by love of the Soviets as they were by their hatred of Britain. This hatred was among other things the product of the breakdown of the old British monarchical-aristocratic ethos brought on by the meaningless bloodletting of the First World War. And for the homosexuals this attitude must have been compounded by their unmitigable itch for outlawry. For many of Britain's privileged and anomic young men, of course, World War II and the battle against an unmistakable force of evil brought about the restoration of morale. (And what a restoration it was! The world may never look upon its like again.) But Blunt made a straight journey from student radical to outright traitor, wreaking God knows how much damage, in some cases perhaps including political murder, upon his fellow countrymen.

The country's old ethos may have been too weak to have merited Blunt's loyalty, but its indefatigable class snobbery did serve well to keep him protected. For soon after the defections of Burgess, Maclean, and Philby, it began to be whispered that there was a fourth man in their particular game, and maybe others, rumors that went for the most part uninvestigated. It was not so much that no one in authority believed these rumors as that it did not suit their clubby convenience to press further into the matter—the three defectors they had on their hands were embarrassment enough. The whole thing had been most ungentlemanly.

Furthermore, the United States had recently been undergoing the investigative ministrations of a certain Senator McCarthy, and the spectacle was enough to make people think more than twice about pursuing any suspicions of communist-inspired disloyalty. Thus it was that in March of 1956, when an old friend of Burgess and sometime associate of Blunt named Goronwy Rees published a series of articles about Burgess in which he claimed that there were other Comintern agents still at large, including, unmistakably, "one of Burgess's boon sex companions [who] holds a high position in public life today", the consequences of the ensuing scandal all fell upon Rees' head. Rees, who, interestingly,

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does not appear in this novel, was a fellow of All Souls College, a historian, a novelist, and while frequently down at the heels, a member in good standing of the British intellectual and artistic elite. When the articles appeared, they not only cost Rees a job as principal of the University College of Wales, but, with only one or two exceptions among his old friends, made him a social outcast. (The list of those who turned ugly toward him, not out of approval of what Burgess and Blunt had done but from a sense of outrage at being in any way associated with something so vulgar, so infra dig, as anti-communism, included many of Britain's most prestigious writers and thinkers.) Rees would somewhat later find a home in *Encounter* magazine among a group of people for whom anti-communism, so far from being an embarrassment, was then the leading passion of their intellectual lives. Moreover, with Blunt's official exposure by Margaret Thatcher in 1979, Rees was granted the pleasure of vindication, though perhaps too late to soothe the injury done him.

As it happens, Blunt had confessed to the security services as early as 1964, in exchange for a promise from the Old Boys not to prosecute him. Blunt suffered no consequence for fifteen years, until a parliamentary question led to Margaret Thatcher's announcement. And one might be forgiven for thinking that the punishment finally exacted from him—the removal of honors—was somewhat less than what it might have been in a perfect world. Victor Maskell, on the other hand, remains fuzzy on this aspect of his dealings with his interrogators, though the ambiguity of the book's title might include a kind of unspoken allusion to it.

Thus, *pace* its American publisher, while the book does touch on an aspect of life in Britain and is at least partly a fiction, in the end it has nothing to do with the reality of Soviet espionage or twentieth-century history, and even less with the bloody impact of the former on the latter. A novel that might far more appropriately include these categories in its cataloguing data would be about the experience of being vilified by and ostracized from polite society for trying to tell the truth about Soviet activities in Western democratic societies. But *that* story is one from which even today—with the Soviet Union in the dust—people prefer to avert their eyes. No doubt it will soon be forgotten. □

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Not-So-Innocents Abroad

Herb Greer

Gilles Kepel, *Allah in the West* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1997), 273 pp., $29.50.

GILLES KEPEL IS director of research at the French National Science Research Council and a leading Western authority on the world of Islam. The 1994 English-language version of his most recent opus, *The Revenge of God*, as well as his 1985 book *The Prophet and the Pharaoh*, were well received by the best of the American and British Orientalist academies. A new book by Kepel is therefore bound to generate expectations, and let it be said at once that *Allah in the West* has at least one important merit: His description of the fissiparous Islamic movement in the West is a convincing corrective to

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media scare-stories that portray Islam as a kind of religious cognate to the defunct Communist Conspiracy, a monolithic threat to the West.

But *Allah in the West* is not really an extended essay on Islam *in* the West. Nor is it (claims on the dust jacket notwithstanding) an analysis of the relationship between Islam *and* the West, a subject around which it delicately skirts. It is instead an extended sociological treatise on what Kepel calls "communalism" (*la démarche communautariste*) in the United States, the United Kingdom, and France.

Kepel offers a number of definitions, varying in complexity, for this phenomenon. What they amount to is the tendency of certain minorities (usually ethnic, sometimes religious) in Western society to establish a kind of self-protective apartheid. In the book's extreme examples—the American black Muslims, the fundamentalist Muslims of Britain and France—this involves a conscious attempt to denigrate and, where possible, exclude the dominant religious and cultural values of the wider majority society. Kepel's method of analysis, he says,

> owes much to Weberian sociology in the importance given to the construction of ideal types which are not necessarily representative of the whole of society, but which reveal underlying patterns and enable us to interpret changes within society.

As to the communalism itself, this is manifested in

> assertions of community identity which are taking place within societies which are moving in the opposite direction . . . toward a growing indistinctiveness [*l'indifférenciation croissante*] of inherited cultural identities.

By this he means that as older sources of identity, and especially of class and the polarities of Right and Left, are weakening in the "post-industrial" consumer societies of America, Britain, and France, forces such as Islam exert themselves as high-profile cultural impulses countering this tendency. This is, in essence, Kepel's guiding thesis, and the bulk of the book's narrative is meant to illustrate it.

The thesis is parsimonious, the book's structure is symmetrical, and on a more or less platonic level the package, taken together, has a superficial plausibility. But when Kepel turns to cases he gets into real trouble, the sort of trouble that shows the difference between being a master of Islam and Islamic societies (which Kepel is) and a master of the fractious sociology of Western societies within which Islamic communities are a small part (which Kepel is not). His internationally respected expertise in Islamic matters simply does not extend to their infusion within Western politics and society.

Once across this boundary, Kepel finds himself writing not as a scholar but as an intellectual—that is, on the basis of *aperçus* rather than data. Even this would be fine if the settings for his argument were in the real world. Unfortunately, he has instead cobbled up a sort of sociological theme-park America, Britain, and France. His "ideal types" do not reveal underlying patterns, but conceal them. This shows up as early as the first page:

> [France in 1989] was rent by divisions as it had not been since the Dreyfus Affair, over an apparently trifling incident: could French society allow three Muslim girls . . . to wear an Islamic veil to attend state school?

Such a statement soars heroically over the traumatic internal conflicts of the Second World War, the Indochina conflict, and especially the Algerian Revolution, which literally brought France to the edge of civil war. It does not inspire much confidence in his method or his political knowledge of his own country—let alone that of the United States or Great Britain.

The first of Kepel's three main cases is devoted to America and the Black Muslims. Here again Kepel's "communalist Islam" thesis has an initial plausibility, except for one

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factor: he is not talking about the real Islam. Kepel sketches out an admirably detailed history of the curious sect that was founded during the Depression by one W.D. Fard among the blacks of Detroit; but the so-called Black Muslims have nothing to do with Islam save for the expropriation of a vocabulary of catchwords invoking Allah, a borrowed dietary rule or two, and occasional and highly selective quotes from the Quran. It is well known that the sect began as a stunted, ethnically based example of the millenarian groups that have appeared in American society for more than a century. Kepel's interesting description shows, if only inadvertently, that from this beginning the "Nation of Islam" developed into something much more like the chauvinistic Fascist cabals in the Europe of the 1930s, complete with a racist mythology, uniformed storm troopers recruited from an underclass, economic grievances, fake history, and a puritanically moral high horse. Paradoxically, the use of the ritualistic label of "Islam" to mark out their separateness places Black Muslims squarely in the Euro-American mainstream sensibility, which perceives genuine Islam as a fundamental "other", outside and inimical to Western civilization.

Kepel seems to have built his theme-park America out of alternative journalism and opinions of politically correct American academics. He solemnly paraphrases quantities of Louis Farrakhan's paranoid ramblings, apparently taking them seriously, to fit Farrakhan's movement into his communalist thesis; he refers to the Black Muslims as part of an "ideological battle, sparked off in the 1980s, to define the identity of 'multicultural' America." At the same time, he asserts that they represent "a break with 'dominant norms'" in American society. Farrakhan and his followers are in fact firmly attached to dominant American norms: aspiration to political power, to economic success, and to an idiomatic search for spiritual identity and salvation. The "Islamic" label functions as little more than a brand name for an ethnic pressure group which, despite its tribalistic propaganda, fits perfectly into the context of Amero-European culture and, indeed, is working toward a closer rapprochement with the main centers of political power in the United States. Islamic it is not in any proper sense of the word.

Meanwhile, Kepel does not even mention some of the many genuine Muslim groups that do exist in America. There is a real Hanafi Islamic movement among American blacks, and several fairly large expatriate communities of Arab, Iranian, Somali, South Asian, and other groups that live at least semi-organized communal lives in the United States. There are also cells of support for fundamentalist versions of Islam that have been involved at one level or another in U.S. domestic terrorism, such as the February 1993 World Trade Center bombing. These do not appear either.

In his treatment of Britain, Kepel gets into even deeper trouble. He describes a country where the word "patrial" has to do with the domestic rights of immigrants, and seems unaware that the term actually defines the qualification of British colonial passport holders to immigrate to the United Kingdom; it does not apply to the civil rights of minorities already settled inside the country. Kepel's Britain also distinguishes legally between nationality and citizenship, while the real Britain does not. Curiously, for a sociological amateur, he seems unaware of the function of much British rhetoric on ethnic and social issues; like the cant of American radical chic (or academic PC), it is meant primarily to display or flag some notional solidarity, usually with an ethnic underdog group, not to define any realistic commitment to political action.

He is interesting on the background of Islam in colonial India, where Muslims as a minority ruling power were deposed by the British. The result was an Islamic spectrum ranging from purists who wished to isolate the faithful from British and Western influence to those who wished to participate in the political life of the British Empire and show that Islam was compatible with modernity. Even

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the modernizers, however, wished to remain distinct from the non-Muslim world, and Kepel maintains that this tradition, reinforced by the other schismatic sects, was imported by immigrants to Britain, creating a "communalism" new to the U.K. There is a certain truth to this, no doubt, but at this point Kepel returns to the theme-park, telling us that the British government's response "was not to assimilate the immigrants into the dominant society but rather to grant them a parallel status to that of the Welsh and Scottish nations which already existed."

Now, it is true that the newer ethnic minorities are given a kind of special status by Britain's Race Relations Act, but this in no way makes them "parallel" to the Welsh and Scottish nations, both of which are an integral part of the United Kingdom and share its British culture. Unfamiliarity with his subject matter is also evident in Kepel's baffling claim that Chinese, Cypriots, and Italians are regarded by the British as "Black"; this appears to rest on a misunderstanding of the fact that a very few far-Left local councils do give them—along with Asians, Afro-Caribbeans, and Africans—favored minority status. Again, Britain's Education Act does not "promote" Christianity to the status of a cultural norm as Kepel claims—it has been such a norm for more than a millennium. These and other solecisms are so frequent and fundamental that they reduce Kepel's analysis of "communalism" to the banal truism that ethnic minorities, like other special interests, tend to form political and cultural pressure groups.

The actual confrontation of Islam and the West in a British context is touched on in a somewhat scattered description of the Salman Rushdie affair. Usefully, Kepel notes that the famous *fatwa* arose out of a power struggle in the Islamic world, and was meant principally to revive the fading prestige of Khomeini after the Iraq-Iran War. He says, a bit sadly, that the famous book burning in Britain was misunderstood. Taped by the fundamentalists themselves and sent to a media establishment that had until then ignored them, it was meant only to stress the separateness of the faithful from an "ungodly" Western society. The British, with different cultural baggage to carry, saw instead ghosts of Nazi-style tyranny and reacted accordingly. Kepel hints, without actually saying so, that the British should have cut the Islamic fanatics a bit more slack.

THE BOOK'S IMPLICIT argument, that not all the Islamic faithful are driven by an anti-Western animus, is little more than a coded (and badly mistaken) conviction that Islam in the West—indeed Islam in general, except for fundamentalists—is evolving into one more creed on our religious supermarket shelves. It follows that we should discount the activists who are hostile to us—within the West and elsewhere. Since these activists are making a more or less credible run at taking or holding on to power in Iran, Afghanistan, Algeria, Sudan, and much of the Middle East—some of these countries closer than ever to possessing weapons of mass destruction—this seems a dangerously quixotic form of special pleading.

Even more basically, Kepel recognizes but never plumbs to any depth the fact that there *is* a fundamental clash between Islam and Western democratic culture, and that this, as a religious matter, is not accessible to compromise. One cannot help but recall the severe but wise conclusion of T.S. Eliot in *East Coker*: "Ultimately, antagonistic religions must mean antagonistic cultures; and, ultimately, religions cannot be reconciled." In this case, one of the reasons for Western-Islamic antagonism is that our wariness of theocratic politics, the result of bitter experience some centuries ago, does not exist among the Islamic faithful. Basic to Western culture is a private realm in which the individual conscience makes choices about religious matters. This is alien and inimical to Islam, as the gut instincts of the faithful tell them. A close friend among the faithful once remarked to me, "We do not want Islam secularized, like the Church of England, into a

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human branch of the RSPCA [Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals]."

This fundamental difference has important implications for the influence of Islamic pressure groups on politics in Western societies. It is evident in the way Islamic groups deploy Western rhetoric about human rights and demand the rights and privileges conferred by a Western liberal tradition while rejecting those rights and privileges to others on religious grounds. Another curious omission is any mention of the rabid anti-Semitism that exists among Islamic activists. The nearest he gets to it in the American section is to describe the relationship between the "Nation of Islam" and Jews as "complex."

There are other problems. In France, as in Britain, Kepel describes Islam as fissiparous, with several groups and sects competing for official recognition and favor, as well as for adherents among the faithful. While in itself Kepel's account of these groups is more often than not useful and enlightening, it inadvertently undermines his thesis on the growth and importance of "communalism." By his own account, Muslim schismatics spend so much time fighting each other that it seriously impairs their attempts to create a genuine group identity among all the faithful.

Muslim communalists in France who wish to attain some political influence, or reach a sort of compromise with Western values while remaining "apart", find themselves at a special disadvantage: the French system of centralized politics aims, as Kepel says, at assimilation, with less tolerance for these subgroups than the more pluralist societies across the Channel and the Atlantic. There has been a certain amount of political effervescence in France over Islamic issues—e.g., the "veil affair", the bulldozing of a mosque near Lyon in 1989, and the building of mosques elsewhere. These Kepel mentions, but, as in his discussion of the American case, he omits any detailed discussion of Islamic terrorism on French soil. He writes with approval of Islamic activists who "made the state yield" over the veil in state schools—but notes that this, as with other such conflicts, was mostly important in the power struggle among competing Islamic groups. In the politics of France at large these things have to a degree given ammunition to Le Pen and his ilk; but, *pace* Kepel, they have not shaken the political structure of the French Republic as did, for example, the Algerian War.

The most interesting aspect of Kepel's discussion of Islam in a French context is his accurate description of the tension between French and Islamic cultures among educated Algerians. It is a tension that I observed at first hand during the Algerian War, in the poignant confessions of ALN officers and FLN officials that they often felt "more French than Arab." The West-Islamic conflict is in sharper focus here, underlined by Kepel's quotation of a flat statement by the Algerian Islamic Salvation Front leader Ali Benhadj:

> Democracy as the doctrine of the sovereignty of the people contravenes the doctrine of the sovereignty of God, which is the political credo of Radical Islamic activists. Democracy must therefore be rejected wholesale.

TIME AND AGAIN *Allah in the West* speaks melodramatically of Islamic communalist issues "splitting" the societies of the United States, Britain, or France "down the middle." But the phenomenon of "communalism" is neither as new nor as nationally divisive as Kepel makes it seem. Such pressure groups, sometimes religious, sometimes not, have long existed in Amero-European society. Their recent influence on American higher education in the form of political correctness has been ghastly, but this has provoked satirical opposition; and the American political center-of-gravity seems not to have been skewed. In Britain, ethnic pressure groups are being absorbed into the social structure more easily than before, mainly due to the syncretic influence of the media on British politics. Small groups there, ethnic or otherwise, can occasionally exert influence out of proportion to their size; but the integrity of British society is not under threat.

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There is a book to be written about the newer, quasi-tribal patterns of democratic pressure group politics among us. An even more interesting book might analyze the cultural and political contradictions between Islam and the West. *Allah in the West* tries to do both, but, despite much interesting content, does neither one nor the other to any convincing degree. □

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Weighing Anchors

Barrie Dunsmore

Walter Cronkite, *A Reporter's Life* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1996), 384 pp., $26.95.

David Brinkley, *A Memoir* (New York: Random House, 1996), 560 pp., $25.

Howard K. Smith, *Events Leading Up To My Death* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1996), 400 pp., $24.95.

ON JANUARY 30, 1968, the beginning of the Chinese lunar new year festival known as Tet, 70,000 communist troops launched a surprise offensive throughout South Vietnam. The attackers surged into more than a hundred cities and towns, and, for the first time, Saigon and the vast U.S. Embassy complex in the heart of the city came under rocket fire.

A few weeks later, the U.S. military claimed that because of the heavy losses the Viet Cong had suffered, "Tet" was a defeat for the communists. That was literally true, but Tet was nevertheless both a political and propaganda victory for the communists, and a key turning point in the war in Vietnam. This was because the intensity and scope of the Tet Offensive shocked most Americans, who had been led to believe that given American superiority in firepower and technology, victory in Vietnam was inevitable if not imminent.

This sense of shock acquired a significant amplification in the key electronic media—television. At a time when television news anchormen rarely left their studios, CBS News' Walter Cronkite hurried to Vietnam to prepare a special report on the Tet Offensive and its implications for American involvement in the war. As a veteran war correspondent, with the clout and contacts that only an anchorman can have, Cronkite was certainly qualified to do such a report. And, of course, according to numerous polls, he was at that time "the most trusted man in America."

At the conclusion of that special broadcast on Tet in late February, Cronkite did something he had almost never done before, and certainly not on the subject of Vietnam. After much agonizing he decided that he had to put his credibility on the line and offer a personal opinion. This is what he said:

> To say that we are closer to victory today is to believe, in the face of the evidence, the optimists who have been wrong in the past. To suggest that we are on the edge of defeat is to yield to unreasonable pessimism. To say that we are mired in stalemate seems the only realistic, yet unsatisfactory conclusion. . . . It is increasingly clear to this reporter that the only rational way out, then, will be to negotiate, not as victors, but as honorable people who lived up to their pledge to defend democracy, and did the best they could.

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At the White House, President Lyndon Johnson watched the special report with some of his staff, including News Secretary George Christian and his assistant, Bill Moyers. According to Moyers, when the program was over, "The President flipped off the set and said 'If I've lost Cronkite, I've lost Middle America.'" Five weeks later, on March 31, Johnson announced that he would not seek re-election, this in the context of a unilateral bombing pause of North Vietnam.

No one would suggest that Cronkite changed the course of the Vietnam War, or that he was singly responsible for the President's decision to throw in the towel. But Johnson was prescient when he noted Cronkite's link with "Middle America", for by the end of 1968 most of Middle America came to share Cronkite's views on the war.

IN THE FORMATIVE years of television, from about the mid-Fifties to the mid-Seventies, before the proliferation of channels that came with cable and satellites, CBS, NBC, and ABC were indeed the windows on the world for the great majority of the American people. Each night, more than fifty million Americans would gather in front of their TV sets at the dinner hour to watch the evening news. (Fewer than twenty million do so today. And while ABC was number three in that race, it actually had about twice as many viewers in the late Sixties and Seventies as it had in the early nineties when it was number one.)

The newscasts evolved into a combination national town meeting, teach-in, and therapy session, where people could learn about and ponder the momentous events of their world, their nation, and their neighborhoods. And these were momentous times. The Cold War was at its height and nuclear war was widely believed to be a very real possibility. By 1965, the war in Vietnam was raging. Much of the Middle East and Africa was in turmoil and either region had the potential to ignite a superpower confrontation. At home, a president, his brother, and the country's most prominent black leader were assassinated—the latter two in a single year, 1968. Below the seething surface, too, the country was in the throes of at least four ongoing and interlocking social revolutions over race, feminism, sexual freedom, and an array of new technologies. At such a moment, the newly found power of television could have become an instrument for division and extremism, as a free but irresponsible press has been in other times and in other places. It did not.

Perhaps more by accident than design, the television news broadcasts of that era were voices of moderation amid chaos. They reflected middle class values and essentially centrist politics, mainly because the men who produced and presented them were middle class and moderate—sometimes a little to the left, sometimes a bit to the right, but never far from the center.

While there were many people involved in these news programs, three men became their personifications: Walter Cronkite, David Brinkley, and Howard Kingsbury Smith. All three men have now written memoirs. In addition to serving as fascinating first-hand accounts of much of the history of this century, these books also tell us much about how and why television news did what it did back then. In the interests of full disclosure I must say that as a network television correspondent with ABC News, I was part of that era and worked, quite closely at times, with both Smith and Brinkley. I have great respect for all three men. As I do know them all personally, I can say that in their memoirs each author has found his authentic voice. As you read along you can hear Cronkite's earnest high-to-low cadences; Brinkley's short, staccato sentences touched with irony; and Smith's soft, slight Southern drawl.

The same was true when we watched them on television. We were getting an authentic person, not the creation of show-doctors working with focus groups and Q-ratings, makeup artists, or publicity departments. These were genuine, bona fide journalists who came across on television very much the way they came across in person. They do so, too, in their books.

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While the personality of each man was certainly different, it is remarkable how similar the men were in terms of background and personal and journalistic philosophy. All are white, Anglo-Saxon Protestants (though Smith's mother was a Catholic). All were from middle class families, though their early lives were far from idyllic. Their mothers were strong and dominant women who seem not to have liked their husbands much. Brinkley says he was an unwanted child. Smith's father was a ne'er-do-well from an antebellum aristocratic family since gone broke. And Cronkite's father was an alcoholic.

Remarkably, too, all were Southerners, Brinkley from North Carolina, Smith from Louisiana, and Cronkite, though born in Missouri, resident in Texas after the age of ten. Their stories of growing up testify to how they were imbued with solid family values, a sense of personal responsibility, and a strong moral compass that left no doubts over the fundamentals of what was right or wrong. They all went to college and eventually all three worked as wire service reporters with United Press, almost certainly the best possible training ground for any serious journalist.

Their Southern backgrounds are very important to how they approached one of the major stories of their times, the civil rights movement. As young men, none of the three had been an activist for racial equality. In fact, Cronkite confesses that he lacked the courage to take issue with his high school friends when they made racist remarks. But all had seen enough of racism in the South to know that it was morally wrong to perpetuate a system that enforced unequal treatment and protection under the law. This was a proposition that would eventually be accepted by the nation as a whole, with no little help from network television news.

It was not easy being a Southerner covering the civil rights movement for a national network. According to Brinkley,

> It was, as NBC's thinking went, my part of the country and so it was a story for me to do. I did it and it was the most difficult work of my life. Telling the news as straight as I could was not enough. Nothing could satisfy some of the extreme and some not so extreme elements in the South. [They] did not want the news straight. They wanted it slanted, but slanted their way. . . . The mail was poisonous. There were death threats by mail and phone.

Brinkley goes on to recount one of the more ironic consequences of his reporting on civil rights:

> The manager of an affiliated station in North Carolina called me a traitor to my home state and in the crudest terminology of the time and place, a 'nigger lover.' He tried to get me off the air but failed. [Then] he hired a reporter, previously unknown, deeply unskilled and something of a rural tin-horn. He put him on his local station each night immediately following NBC News and gave him the assignment to 'answer Brinkley's lies.'
>
> Every night he came on just after our news program and carefully explained that I was a 'turncoat Southerner turned Northern radical' incapable or unwilling to tell the truth about the problems in the South, most of the troubles caused by 'outside agitators' like me.
>
> He did his job so effectively he became an admired public figure, whereupon he chose to turn his new popularity to his own advantage and run for the United States Senate. He ran. On the strength of his attacks on me, he was elected. His name: Senator Jesse Helms, Republican, North Carolina.

Howard K. Smith encountered even more serious problems. He was fired by CBS News following a documentary he did on events in Birmingham, Alabama. Smith was one of "the Murrow boys", those reporters hired by the legendary Edward R. Murrow on the eve of the Second World War, who distinguished themselves in their coverage of the war. Smith was on the last train out of Berlin after Pearl Harbor, stayed on the Continent to cover the war, and then was one of the first

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reporters back into Germany after the surrender. Like many of the Murrow boys, and, of course, Murrow himself, Smith had some problems adjusting from wartime to peacetime. He had a strong penchant for commentary, which, during the war, CBS thought was just fine. But in the Fifties, with the rise of Senator Joseph McCarthy, the CBS brass became squeamish about his views, especially when they were left of center. Smith, however, kept pushing the envelope in his commentaries, which did not endear him to top management.

The final rupture came over a documentary Smith prepared on a series of racial incidents in Birmingham in 1961. It featured an attack by Ku Klux Klan members on protesters who had just arrived from out of town. The Klan used bicycle chains, blackjacks, brass knuckles, and baseball bats to make its point. The city's police commissioner, "Bull" Connor, and his force sat passively in their headquarters across the street until the riot was over. Smith was outraged: "Witnessing the savage beatings in Birmingham was my worst experience since the opening of the concentration camps at the end of World War Two." In his commentary at the conclusion of the program, Smith used the well-known—if still unsubstantiated—quotation from a speech by Edmund Burke: "The only thing necessary for the triumph of evil is for good men to do nothing."

Once the documentary was complete, it was screened by a battery of lawyers and network vice presidents. As the lights went up at the end of the showing, one of the lawyers went immediately on the attack: "Smith's quotation from Burke is straight editorial. It's out." What followed, Smith says, was a long, bitter hour. In the end he concedes that even with the cuts forced by the brass, "We had a respectable documentary . . . effective enough to get the city commission of Birmingham to sue CBS for a large amount."

But for Smith there was no redemption. CBS President William Paley ordered him to New York immediately. In anticipation of that meeting, Smith sent Paley a memo, the essential point being that giving equal weight to Bull Connor and to Chief Justice Earl Warren, and leaving it at that, was the equivalent of saying that truth is to be found somewhere between right and wrong, equidistant between good and evil. The civil rights issue, he argued, was not one over which reasonable minds might differ; one side was clearly justified by the Constitution, the other clearly not. In Smith's account of their meeting, Paley threw the memo across the table saying, "I've heard all this junk before. If that is what you believe, you had better go somewhere else." And so he did, to ABC, to the great benefit of that network.[1]

THE assassination of President John Kennedy was a major watershed for television news in this country. Whatever warts have since been discovered in Kennedy's persona, at the time of his death he was a much beloved president. When tears welled up in Cronkite's eyes as he announced that Kennedy had died, he reflected an emotion almost universally shared by the American people.

Television's three-day nonstop coverage of the aftermath of the event went a very long way in calming a deeply shaken and, at the margin, almost paranoid population. It was crucially important at this time of highest anxiety for the networks to conduct themselves responsibly. After all, just a year before, the United States and the Soviet Union had come to the brink of nuclear war over the Cuban missile crisis. Were the Russians behind the assassination? Should we launch a pre-emptive nuclear strike against them if they were? The TV networks firmly said "no" and "no" to those questions in the early days after the assassination, and the country began to

[1]The city of Birmingham lost its suit against CBS. After a time, CBS News correspondents reporting on civil rights were heard using the Burke quotation, evidently without objection from the management.

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breathe easier. One can almost hear the breathless tones and the purple prose of the tabloid programs if something like a presidential assassination were to befall us today. But in November 1963 the networks and their anchors behaved with great seriousness and dignity, and in so doing achieved new levels of respect in the eyes of most Americans.

As noted at the beginning, the war in Vietnam, too, was a major turning point for Walter Cronkite and for network news generally. TV pictures of American Marines using Zippo lighters to set fire to a Vietnamese village, supposedly "in order to save it", burned themselves into the American psyche. There can be no doubt that television helped to shape Middle America's feelings about the war, although it was the number of body bags that finally turned them against it. Cronkite was the first anchor publicly to oppose continuing the war. Brinkley was less open in his opposition, though he harbored personal feelings that were apparently even stronger than Cronkite's. Brinkley writes, "I thought it was a total abomination that should be stopped immediately, that every life lost there was wasted for no purpose, and that Johnson was to blame because he lacked the political courage to halt a pointless, endless bloody war that could not be won."

Then there was Howard K. Smith. On many issues, Smith was more liberal than his colleagues. But in the case of Vietnam, he went on supporting the war long after most Washington pundits had given up on it. Though his son Jack had been severely wounded in the Battle of the Ia Drag Valley in 1965, Smith continued to believe in the domino theory. This was obviously a product of his years of working in Hilter's Germany in the 1930s, where the lesson that appeasement only encourages aggression made an indelible impression upon him. Smith did programs and commentaries defending U.S. policy in Vietnam right up through the bloody riots at the 1968 Democratic National Convention in Chicago. But as he now admits, it got harder and harder:

> My commentaries, critical of the anti-Vietnam rioters and in favor of fighting on in Vietnam, ran head-on against the liberal mainstream. I lost old friends, as a bison loses hair, in large swatches. [Walter] Lippmann was a most regrettable loss.
>
> As I collided again and again with long admired friends, I heard Cromwell's imperative as if directed across the ages specifically to me: 'I beseech you, in the bowels of Christ, think it possible you may be mistaken.'

The fact that Smith supported the war while his fellow anchormen opposed it may seem to dilute the thesis that the evening news programs as a group were centrist and so pulled government to the center. Not so; the fact that there was not one monolithic view on a subject as significant as the war gave the networks a certain credibility with their viewers. In a sense their dissensus reflected the national ambiguity. When finally all the anchors, and the majority of the nation, wanted to bring the war to an end, Richard Nixon was elected on a pledge to bring peace with honor to Vietnam. In 1968, almost no one imagined that it would take seven more years to end the war, and few believed that the end, when it did come, would not be honorable at all.

IN THE ARENA OF presidential politics, moderation was again the order of the day for the anchors and their networks. The network news programs were skeptical and nervous about conservative Republican candidate Senator Barry Goldwater in 1964. But they were no more enthusiastic for the campaign of the liberal Senator George McGovern in 1972. Extremism, in the defense of anything, found no aid or comfort in network news rooms. It is therefore particularly notable to read Brinkley's analysis of the person of Barry Goldwater:

> I liked Senator Goldwater. I thought some of his political views were extreme and excessive, but it seemed to me he was only saying what he figured an Air Force general from the Arizona

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> desert was expected to say. There was little or no meanness in him. On the contrary, there was a real friendliness and generosity in him and he was always good company when he was not surrounded by those of his followers who behaved like political banshees.

Indeed, the men the anchors chose as political heroes suggests that they were not in ideological lock-step, but instead possessed an independence and diversity that, again, probably enhanced their collective credibility and acceptability. Smith says, for example, "In my order of worship, Roosevelt was separated from God only by Abraham Lincoln." Brinkley had a much different view of FDR:

> Roosevelt being the social snob he was, frequently berated reporters covering the White House. . . . He made no attempt to hide his opinion that we were poorly educated . . . and so we could not possibly know enough . . . or understand enough to report to the American people accurately and fairly about the activities of their president, a 'C' student at Harvard.

Notwithstanding their differing views over presidential personalities, the network news programs tended to be supportive of most government policies in foreign affairs, with Vietnam being the notable exception. They were supportive in large measure because that's the way the anchors felt about the policies. Cronkite was the first anchor to assume the "managing editor" title, but all anchors had a role in choosing what was on their programs and how each story would be treated. (That is true even more so today.)

Naturally enough, views on foreign policy and on particular presidents sometimes collided in unexpected ways. Although he had been responsible for a program called "The Political Obituary of Richard Nixon", done after Nixon lost the race for governor of California in 1962, Smith had a high regard for Nixon's handling of foreign affairs, particularly the opening to China. So did Cronkite, who was not otherwise a fan of Nixon:

> Nixon, regardless of whatever other opinions people had of him, deserved credit for his studious approach to foreign policy. And he should be recognized for the move toward reconciliation with China that he initiated when most of the powerful members of the Republican hierarchy were deeply opposed. It was an act of great political courage.

Hence, the Nixon of the McCarthy era or of Watergate would be reviled or ridiculed by the anchors, but the Nixon who pursued détente and arms control with the Soviets and took a pragmatic view of China was applauded. When Nixon behaved as a centrist, he could expect the evening news programs to convey the message that his foreign policies were in the best long-term interests of the United States. His national security adviser and then secretary of state, Henry Kissinger, worked effectively behind the scenes with the elite press to reinforce that message.

As foreign policy landmarks go, the March 1979 Egyptian-Israeli Peace Treaty rates high on the list of diplomatic achievements in the second half of the twentieth century. Israeli Premier Menachem Begin and Egyptian President Anwar Sadat were awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for their respective roles in achieving that peace. I have always thought that President Jimmy Carter should have been included and that, more to the point here, Walter Cronkite might well have received an honorable mention. Cronkite's interviews with Begin and Sadat nailed down Sadat's historic visit to Jerusalem, which led ultimately to the peace agreement.

Cronkite denies that he was actively engaged in any diplomatic midwifery, and he points out that Sadat had been talking privately for months about making such a dramatic gesture. But Cronkite also observes, "The important point is that television journalism, in this case at least, speeded up the process, brought it into the open, removed a lot of possibly obstructionist middlemen, and made it difficult for the principals to renege on their very public agreement." One may add that

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when world leaders, American or otherwise, were willing to moderate hardline positions in the interests of peace, they were warmly embraced and encouraged by the anchors. It hasn't always been so, but in the classical era of American television the peacemakers got far more air time than the demagogues.

Television news was also the principal cheerleader for what became known as the space race. Cronkite immersed himself in the minutiae of space flight in ways that made him seem like one of the astronauts. But beyond his technical expertise was the subliminal message: His enthusiastic support for the program meant that Cronkite was giving his personal imprimatur to the goal of putting a man on the moon. In so doing, he deflected any opposition to such an uncertain and expensive enterprise that may have emerged at the time. The public's reaction seemed to be that if Walter was for it, it must be good for America.

IN THE TIME of Cronkite, Brinkley, and Smith, network television news had its period of greatest influence mainly because it rejected extremes, supported moderation, and had as its symbols men of unquestioned journalistic excellence and integrity. In holding to centrist policies, the anchors and their colleagues contributed at least a little to peace and stability in both foreign and domestic affairs. The daily arguments in their newsrooms were not about what story would be the most broadly interesting, amusing, or titillating, but what was the most intrinsically important; what it was that viewers needed to know to make them better citizens. As Eric Severeid of CBS once said, "My job is not to tell you what to think. It is to suggest what you should think about."

Those days are gone, just as other golden ages have passed away when the unique set of circumstances that created them somehow changed. Peter Jennings, Ted Koppel, Tom Brokaw, and Dan Rather are fine journalists. They learned at the feet of masters like Smith, Brinkley, and Cronkite, and they have made their own important contributions as reporters during the years in question. As anchors, they are struggling to carry on the best of the tradition. But they are struggling under entirely different, and not especially helpful, circumstances.

Thirty years ago the network news divisions did not function for the sole purpose of making money. Bill Paley was first and foremost a businessman, not a journalist, but he enjoyed the prestige that CBS News brought him. He didn't expect the news department to be a principal vehicle for enriching his stockholders, nor did the heads of NBC or ABC think differently. When I joined ABC news in 1965, the annual budget of the news division was five million dollars and it lost money. When I left thirty years later, the budget had ballooned one hundred times to $500 million, and it cleared another $2-300 million above that annually.

This transformation from network loss-leader to cash cow has changed dramatically the nature of network news. It means that the number one preoccupation of those who now run the network news divisions are the ratings, because the amount of money brought in depends on those ratings. This accounts more for the changed nature of the news than the declining number of viewers, a decline to which the cash-cow approach itself probably contributes.

The other major change in network news has been brought about by the end of the Cold War. As long as there was the threat of Armageddon, the networks felt obligated to report on related foreign and U.S. foreign policy news. They no longer feel so obliged. Among other things, this means that the network's role as a force for moderation and general education in the area of foreign affairs has been significantly diminished.

Among many of the younger people who now work in network television news, the common metaphor for the old anchors is that they were "dinosaurs." Superficially that may be true, but, unlike the dinosaurs, we know exactly why the likes of Brinkley, Smith, and

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Cronkite have disappeared from the airwaves. And after reading their respective memoirs, each of them plain-spoken, evocative, and reflective of the good men who wrote them, we can genuinely regret their extinction. □

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Breezier, Chattier, Worse

Many of my friends and colleagues have worked in dangerous places and have certainly taken risks; but the danger has rarely if ever come from our own government. The risks we took tended to be overseas. We could always come home.

And yet, in some respects, journalism in America today may be in greater peril than in some of the more obviously dangerous places that are so clearly inhospitable to our profession. We celebrate the men and women whose dedication to the collection and distribution of facts threatens their very existence. When they antagonize those with money, political power and guns, they risk their lives. We, on the other hand, tremble at nothing quite so much as the thought of boring our audiences. Antagonizing the rich and powerful is our bread and butter; far from involving any great risk to our safety, it is one of the more reliable paths to professional advancement. The preferred weapons of the rich and powerful here in America are the pollster and the public relations consultant. But they are no threat to the safety of journalists. Our enemies are far more insidious than that. They are declining advertising revenues, the rising cost of newsprint, lower ratings, diversification and the vertical integration of communications empires.

They are the breezier, chattier styles insinuating themselves onto the front pages of our more distinguished newspapers. They are the fading lines between television news and entertainment. . . . It is not death or torture or imprisonment that threatens us as American journalists, it is the trivialization of our industry. We are free to write and report whatever we believe is important. But if what is important does not appeal to the reading or viewing appetites of our consumers, we'll give them something that does. . . .

—Ted Koppel, "Journalism Under Fire", *The Nation*, November 24, 1997

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Qu'est-ce qu'une réfutation?

Noel Malcolm

ANATOL LIEVEN'S article "Qu'est-ce qu'une nation?" (Fall 1997) is, like the curate's boiled egg in the old *Punch* cartoon, good in parts. The good parts are the generalities: his account of the difference between "primordialist" and "constructionist" theories of national identity is admirably lucid, and so too is his general argument that the "construction" of such identities is far from being the mechanical or arbitrary process that the term is sometimes taken to imply. No doubt the full explanation of the development of national identity must involve, where most nations or peoples are concerned, both the material of pre-existing realities (of language, culture, religion, political history, et cetera) and the more active workings of imagination and ideology. Doubtless, too, the mix will vary from case to case; local factors are never quite the same, and each national identity will be, like Tolstoy's unhappy families, national in its own different way. These are general truths, and Lieven's exposition of them is, surely, generally correct.

It is in the detail of his argument, however, and in its application to particular cases, that Lieven goes wrong. Much of the problem lies in his method of refutation. First he sets up a straw man, a dogmatic ultra-constructionist; then he identifies with that straw man the authors with whom he disagrees on particular cases (the commentators he singles out are Johnathan Sunley, Norman Stone, and myself); and then, instead of presenting evidence that would disprove what we have claimed about those particular cases (claims about Moldova, for example, in Sunley's writings, or about Bosnia in mine), he relies on a priori arguments to do his work for him. But those arguments simply fail. Neither Sunley, nor Stone, nor I, nor anyone else I can think of, has claimed on a priori grounds that all national conflicts must necessarily be caused by artificial manipulation from above. We have merely observed, from empirical evidence, that this is what has in fact happened in many cases, and that, in the particular political circumstances of post-communist Eastern Europe, such instances amount to a general pattern.

These observations have nothing to do with any theoretical commitment to ultra-constructionism. A rough analogy might clarify this point. Sexual identity and sexual desire are usually based, like national identity and national feeling, on some pre-existent realities—in this case, biological ones. Sunley and I, observing several episodes of mass rape, find reasons to believe that these incidents were organized from above. Lieven, instead of providing evidence to the contrary, merely identifies us with some Foucault-style straw man who says that sexual identity is nothing more than an arbitrary social construction.

What is really needed to refute our claims about Eastern Europe is empirical evidence to overturn our interpretations of the causes of

Noel Malcolm is author of *Bosnia: A Short History* (NYU Press, 1994). His new book, *Kosovo: A Short History*, will be published in 1998.

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particular conflicts. This Lieven fails to supply. He seems to agree that manipulation from above has been a key factor in some conflicts; his disagreement with Sunley is merely about how long the list of such conflicts is. The best way to prove Sunley wrong would be to give some detailed case histories of conflicts that Sunley believes were manufactured from above, but which Lieven can demonstrate to have been caused from below. But apart from a few assertive remarks made in passing about the Nagorno-Karabakh war, Lieven does not even attempt this. Instead, paradoxically, his most detailed examples are of cases in the Baltic states where he agrees that there were definite attempts to manipulate and manufacture conflicts from above, but where, he notes, the attempts failed. If Lieven thinks that these examples overturn Sunley's argument, then he is making the elementary logician's confusion between a necessary cause (necessary, that is, in these particular cases) and a sufficient one.

WHERE THE particularities of the Yugoslav or Bosnian case are concerned, Lieven is doubly wrong. He is mistaken in what he says, or at least implies in a negative sort of way, about the origins of the war there, and he is also quite mistaken about the position he thinks I have taken on this issue. While I realize that the second of these mistakes is, *sub specie aeternitatis*, of minuscule importance, let me deal with it first.

Lieven begins his article by suggesting that the only alternative to the policy actually pursued by Western governments over the wars in Croatia and Bosnia was to intervene militarily by sending in large numbers of ground troops. He then puts my name forward as, apparently, a prime advocate of such all-out intervention. At the end of his article he appears to return to this theme, implying that NATO soldiers will be endangered if their masters are "foolish" enough to listen to the advice of people such as me.

Lieven is badly misinformed, both about Yugoslav affairs and about my views. I never advocated the sending of Western ground troops to intervene in the war in Bosnia; on the contrary, I argued consistently against it, and pointed out repeatedly that the Bosnian government itself was not asking for such an intervention. I also pointed out, again and again, that to present this kind of intervention as the only alternative to the existing policy was to misrepresent the situation. In Lieven's article that misrepresentation is perpetuated.

Broadly speaking, there were not two but three policy options: anti-Serb, neutral, or pro-Serb. (When I say "Serb" here I refer, of course, not to Serbs in general but to their political leaders and those leaders' military forces.) Western governments claimed to be following the second of these policies, but in crucial ways they were in fact pursuing the third. By actively enforcing an arms embargo, they locked in a massive strategic advantage on the Serb side, which, from the start of the war, already possessed huge stockpiles of arms. By sending in token forces, the Western powers created a potential or actual hostage situation that gave the Serbs extra leverage over their policymaking. I could extend this list of implicit, and in some ways perhaps unintended, pro-Serb aspects of Western policy. (I did in fact develop this argument at greater length in the Spring 1995 issue of *The National Interest*.)

As a British citizen, I do not want British soldiers to be committed in a full-scale ground war for any purpose except the defense of vital, immediate British interests—which were not at stake in Bosnia in 1992. I would expect American citizens to have similar views about their own troops. This does not mean, on the other hand, that European NATO powers had no long-term strategic interest in preventing the outbreak of such a massively disruptive war in their own backyard; I believe that they could have done that through the use of airpower during the first days of Milošević's military operation. Given their complete reluctance to act in such a way, the best policy would have been a genuinely non-interventionist one, allowing the Bosnian government to buy arms on the world market and defend

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its state against unprovoked attack. As the war developed, however, Western involvement there—of the sort I had constantly argued against—created an ever-rising level of Western responsibility for the outcome of events. To correct this, I advocated a more active policy that would help the Bosnian government in more positive but subsidiary ways. These included some use of airpower, which, I believed, could be deployed at low levels of risk to NATO pilots. In August and September 1995 this belief was proved, belatedly, to be correct.

As for the origins and causes of the war in Bosnia, Lieven does not even attempt an explanation of his own; so to controvert him is as difficult as grappling with thin air. His only method of argument on this point is to set up a parody of what he disagrees with: his "Iago" image of people being persuaded by the malign whispers of propaganda to "rush out madly and start strangling their neighbors." I do believe that propaganda and psychological manipulation played an important role, but I do not think, and have never said, that the war was created merely by persuading ordinary Bosnians to go out and kill their neighbors. The war was created in the way that wars are usually made: by a political commander-in-chief (Milošević) using his military forces to achieve political purposes. As I said in my *Bosnia: A Short History* (p. 238): "It is quite clear that the conquest was mainly achieved by federal army forces directed from Belgrade, and paramilitary groups from Serbia. In other words . . . this was predominantly an invasion of Bosnia planned and directed from Serbian soil."

Propaganda was churned out relentlessly by the state-controlled Serbian media before and during the war, and certainly had an effect. But the most crucial propaganda was the propaganda of the deed, not the word. For example: When, in April 1992, ordinary Serbs from small towns in eastern Bosnia awoke to find the streets littered with the bodies of their Muslim neighbors, murdered by newly arrived Serb paramilitary units, this was a very powerful way of reinforcing the message (hitherto only a verbal one) that the apparent normality of their town life up until then had concealed dreadful hidden threats and dangers—typically, the danger of some secret Muslim conspiracy to murder local Serbs in their beds. How could such a terrible sight—a bloody, sticky reality in your own street—not have somehow an equally terrible reality as its justification?

The deed thus completed the job that the word had merely begun. Paradoxically, the fact that it was the Muslims who were murdered did not cancel out the claim that they were the murderous ones: it gave it a much-needed psychological reinforcement. And for those who then went along with the murder or expulsion of their Muslim neighbors (whether because they accepted those claims, or because they just wanted to keep their heads down), a further psychological mechanism came, as time passed, into play: the mechanism of acquired complicity. Many Bosnian Serbs today do not *want* to believe that there was no Muslim conspiracy to kill them, not merely because they have heard the reality of this conspiracy affirmed so often that it no longer sounds strange to them, but also because to admit that it was unreal would make their own actions hard to live with in retrospect.

I have frequently heard it said that propaganda, on principle, cannot be held responsible for anything, because if it works it does so only by locating pre-existing prejudices in its target audience. Lieven goes along with this, to some extent, in his article: he writes that Milošević and his counterparts "would not have been so successful in their manipulations if they had not had a mass of suitably conditioned human material to work on." But how successful is "so successful"? There are differences in degree here that amount to differences in kind: day-to-day prejudices are one thing, but an acceptance of, or participation in, mass-murder is very much another. All through his article, Lieven's terminology glides effortlessly up and down a slippery sliding scale, from "national identity" to "national feeling", to "nationalism", to "national hatreds", to "national hostilities", and finally

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to "national conflicts." At times he seems to take it for granted that if you have a national (or ethnic) identity, it will sooner or later lead you to kill people of a different identity. But it is precisely the transition from prejudice to war that needs to be explained, and, in the Yugoslav case, receives no proper explanation in his account.

He criticizes me for trying to deny "the truth, depth, and antiquity of national feelings and national hostilities." But I have never denied that the Bosnian Serbs, for instance, have a sense of national identity resting on pre-existent cultural realities. (I *do* deny the "antiquity" of this identity; elsewhere I have given reasons for thinking that the Orthodox Bosnians only started to gain a sense of Serb national identity in the nineteenth century. If Lieven has evidence to the contrary, he should present it.) But, most importantly, what I deny is that a sense of national identity led people naturally or inevitably to take part in the mass murder of Bosnian Muslims in 1992-95.

Again, let me propose a rough analogy. The last time I said in a public lecture in America that the war in Bosnia was not caused by "ancient ethnic hatreds", someone came up to me afterwards and said that he did not believe me, because twenty years ago his family once had a Croatian *au pair* who confided in them that she didn't like Serbs. From this not untypical example of day-to-day national prejudice, it seemed to him entirely natural that the people of the former Yugoslavia should have slid, of their own accord, down that slippery scale to national conflict and mass murder. My analogy would be as follows: If I traveled around America today, I could probably collect many examples of whites confiding in me that they did not really like or trust blacks, would not want their daughter to marry one, and so on. But if I returned to America five years later and found that black-inhabited districts had been bombarded with heavy artillery, and that many tens of thousands of blacks had been murdered or put in concentration camps, would I then be justified in saying, "Oh well, it doesn't surprise me; I always knew that the whites didn't really like the blacks"?

Would it not make more sense to start asking what political measures had brought about this extraordinarily rapid transition from one end of the sliding scale to the other? And if I found evidence of such political manipulation at work, and presented it, would it be an adequate refutation to announce that I was just a dogmatic constructionist who denied that blackness or whiteness was based on anything real? □

Anatol Lieven replies:

IT WAS KIND of Noel Malcolm to approve the general principle set out in my essay—but his own position, or pose, as an empirical historian leaves him with little choice. It would be better, however, if he were to apply this principle more rigorously in his own work.

Professor Malcolm alleges that in my essay I set up an artificial "straw man" as an easy target. It is true that part of my essay was focused on one target, but it was a real one: Johnathan Sunley, and in particular, his essay for *The National Interest* (Summer 1996). Furthermore, after a careful reading of some of Malcolm's own writings, I am convinced that Sunley's essay was also a fair representation of the Professor's own approach, albeit perhaps rather crudely expressed.

What is this approach? At first sight, it is almost identical to my own. Malcolm claims to be following an empirical approach, shun-

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ning rigid a priori principles. He admits that every national experience involves a different mixture of factors, and therefore implies his acceptance of the principle that every historical event must be examined in its specificity, and in detail. He deliberately ignores my statement that manipulation of national sentiments from above has often played an important role. In my essay, I mentioned attempts at such manipulation by Milošević in Yugoslavia, Iliescu in Romania, and the Soviet authorities in the Baltic States, and gave some of the various reasons why these attempts had succeeded or failed.

It is quite true, as Malcolm writes, that Transdniestria is also a good example of such manipulation. My treatment of that dispute had to be dropped from the essay for lack of space, but it is discussed at length in the relevant chapter of my forthcoming book on contemporary Russia.[1] In any case, Malcolm can hardly complain that in the limited space available I was not able to deal with all the post-Soviet conflicts, since he himself ignored all the examples I did give.

Much more seriously, Malcolm fails to address directly what is after all my key argument in this context: that "while both communist and nationalist manipulators have indeed been at work in many countries, the readiness of different nations to respond to their provocations has differed enormously according to local circumstance, local history, local culture, and yes, to 'national character.'" The reason that he does not try to "refute" this argument is presumably that he knows he cannot. It is so deeply rooted in both evidence and sheer common sense as to be irrefutable.

Malcolm therefore has to claim to be working on empirical principles, but his own letter reveals the falsity of this claim. It is surely by now blindingly obvious that the "post-communist Eastern Europe" of which he speaks (especially if extended to the former Soviet Republics which I discuss) covers a multitude of political cultures and tendencies; it is equally clear from the vast historiography of national conflicts that in *no* case, anywhere, is it possible to assign one single cause to these phenomena—which is exactly the mistake that Malcolm makes once again in his letter. It is of course legitimate to seek common patterns in post-communist behavior, but to believe that exactly the same pattern is dominant from Azerbaijan to Hungary is ipso facto evidence of a superficial and biased approach. In any event, outside the Bosnian case neither Malcolm nor Sunley provided detailed evidence in support of this argument.

A real historian, rather than an ideologue, knows that for every event, and every war, it is necessary to seek out a hierarchy of causes, with their relative importance differing from case to case. Malcolm's failure in this regard is also revealed in his remark about how "wars are usually made." A cursory acquaintance with either anthropology or history should remind him that the modern Western pattern of warfare is by no means standard for all peoples and times.

Which brings me to Bosnia. First of all, I owe Malcolm an apology on one point. He did indeed call not for ground intervention but for air attack. However, this mistake was in a sense a compliment—the compliment of confusing his position with my own.

The reasons for our difference are summed up in Malcolm's statement that in Western policy toward Bosnia there were three options: "anti-Serb, neutral, or pro-Serb." Malcolm has himself refuted this on a number of occasions, as for example when he wrote at the height of the war that, "The only way the West can save Bosnia now is by a major policy initiative to persuade the *Croatian* president [my italics], Franjo Tudjman, to abandon his own expansionist aims in Bosnia."

To assign chief responsibility for the partition of Bosnia to the Serbs should not be

[1] *Chechnya: Tombstone of Russian Power* will be published by Yale University Press in early 1998. Chapter seven examines the use of what I call the "Serbian option" in Transdniestria, and the reasons why this has not spread to the rest of the Russian diaspora.

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to deny the important role played by the Croats and Croat nationalism. I opposed "lift and strike" because I thought it would lead to a Croat, not a "Bosnian" victory—which is pretty much what has happened. If however there remains any chance of binding Bosnia back together into one functioning society, it lies not in blind backing of one nationality, but in a continuation and intensification of the present policy of military occupation by outside forces backed by economic sticks and carrots. This is not altogether unlike the policy of the Habsburgs or Tito's Yugoslavia—or the British in Northern Ireland, for that matter.

Finally, a word on the Professor's style of argument. His letter makes an analogy—quite inappropriate and in very poor taste—between my arguments concerning the varied origins of national conflict on the one hand and the reasons for mass rape in Bosnia on the other. He thereby suggests to the reader that I would deny that mass rape by the Serbian forces was organized from above. I mentioned this nowhere in my essay, but if I had done so, I should certainly have stated that there is indeed overwhelming evidence for the organization of mass rape by the high Serbian command as a weapon of "ethnic cleansing", and that the leaders concerned should be severely punished for this and their other innumerable atrocities.

That said, the fact that the Serbs adopted this hideous weapon so quickly and on such a widespread scale surely has much to do with the fact that it had been used frequently as a deliberate tactic both by and against the Serbs in the Balkan and Yugoslav wars of 1912-18 and 1941-44, and by Ottoman forces long before that. Stating this in no way diminishes either the evil of what was done by the Serbs in Bosnia or the responsibility of the Serbian leaders. It does however suggest once again the importance of local history. But then, for a long time now history has seemed to make Malcolm uncomfortable. Perhaps he should become a foreign correspondent instead, and learn something about collecting evidence at first hand. □

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—*London* Sunday Telegraph, *July 6, 1997*

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Patrick Clawson, Hafiz Pashayev, Peter Schaefer, Gary L. Bauer, Douglas Feith, Robert Ross, S. Fred Singer

Fragmentation and Hubris:

IN "Fragmentation and Hubris" (Fall 1997), James Schlesinger implies that the U.S. sanctions on Iran were adopted because of the influence of Israel's supporters. ("It is scarcely possible to overstate the influence of Israel's supporters on our policies in the Middle East. . . . It was as instructive as it was unusual for the President to choose as his setting for unveiling his increased sanctions against Iran an address to the World Jewish Congress in New York.")

The suggestion that supporters of Israel were the major influence in the April/May 1995 sanctions on Iran is far-fetched. In fact, the political dynamic was that the new Republican majority in Congress saw the Iran issue as a way to demonstrate that they were tougher on international rogues than was the Clinton administration. The sanctions were meant primarily to take the sails out of congressional hardliners.

Much of the support for sanctions has little to do with Israel or Israel's American supporters. Popular dislike of Iran has been fed by its terrorist attacks on Americans, such as the embassy takeover and the Beirut barracks bombing, and its "Death to America" propaganda. The cultural community is appalled by the Rushdie *fatwa*, which incidentally was the sole reason cited by the Norwegian government when it called in March 1997 for international economic sanctions against Iran. Then there are a host of strategic arguments, such as Iran's pursuit of nuclear weapons and long-range ballistic missiles. A further reason to go for sanctions was the poor record of other approaches. The last time U.S. and Iranian officials met, as part of the Iran-Contra affair, was not a success: U.S. arms sales were not sufficient to secure the release of Americans kidnapped in Lebanon.

Dr. Schlesinger's evidence about the influence of Israel's supporters on the sanctions decision boils down to where the President announced his executive order. The timing of the sanctions decision had nothing to do with the World Jewish Congress. It was driven by the announcement of a major oil investment in Iran by a U.S. firm, namely, Conoco's $600 million development of the Sirri field. It was hardly surprising that the Conoco project was of interest to the World Jewish Congress: the firm of its longtime president, Mr. Bronfman, was a major shareholder in Conoco. It would have been interesting for Dr. Schlesinger to note that some businessmen like Mr. Bronfman are prepared to take a loss to support the strategic interests of the West.

Patrick Clawson
National Defense University

Qu'est-ce qu'une nation?

ANATOL LIEVEN poses an interesting question: Is nationalism a product of "primordial forces", a natural or inherited desire of overwhelming force largely beyond human control, or is it "constructivist", a product of man-made manipulations and responses to a changing environment and events?

While the formulation is interesting from an intellectual standpoint, in my opinion it creates a false choice, as the author himself on occasion seems to imply. While setting up a stark choice between two alternatives helps to organize the debate, it can often oversimplify matters.

In the case of Azerbaijan, which involves the nationalism of ethnic Armenians and Azerbaijanis, I would argue that both primordial forces and constructivist forces have played a role.

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Because of events of 1915 and the influence of Armenia's worldwide diaspora, the sources and nature of Armenian nationalism are more widely known and accepted internationally. There is no question that the ethnic identification and nationalism of Armenians is somewhat primordial, and that has been reinforced by events over the years.

But there is also no question that forces within and outside Armenia have manipulated these genuine feelings of ethnic brotherhood and nationalism to achieve contemporary political objectives. The Russian and the Soviet empires manipulated Armenian nationalism to control not only Armenia but to set it against Azerbaijan in a classic case of divide and conquer. While these empires exist no longer, there remain those who would employ its methods. Armenian nationalism is currently being exploited internally to support the war with Azerbaijan to maintain political power.

Armenian leaders seem to understand both the external and internal manipulation. They have accepted such manipulation of the past, even encouraged it, because it advances their objective of either creating a second Armenian state within Azerbaijan, or because it might lead to a Greater Armenia through annexation of Azerbaijani territory. But those ultra-nationalist dreams of territorial expansion through force have lately run up against reality: the international community, including Russia, no longer accepts aggression as a method of expressing one's nationalism.

Speaking for myself and based on the views and attitudes of friends, family, and other Azerbaijanis, I can say that there is a natural, or primordial, aspect of our nationalism. There is a sense of pride, brotherhood, and community that Azerbaijanis everywhere are born and grow up with. It gives rise to a sense of nationalism because for many, many years our sense of self-identification was denied by various regional empires. It is only through the security of a homeland based on nationhood that we can protect this identity. Historically, because of subjugation, our nationalism has been expressed through our reverence for Azerbaijani poets, writers, musicians, and historians. Never has it been expressed through militarism, because of the very nature of our people, ambitious but non-aggressive.

Our nationalism, unlike that of the Armenians, has never given rise to a desire for territorial expansion. Rather, we merely seek to retain the Azerbaijani nation and culture within secure borders of a nation created by historical events.

Hafiz Pashayev
Ambassador of the Republic of Azerbaijan

The China Question:

YOUR FALL ISSUE on China was very useful but for one thing: the authors did not extend their solid analyses to propose specific U.S. policy options. Let me briefly try my hand to extend their own logic to the most likely near-term challenge we will face.

Robert Ross ("Why Our Hardliners Are Wrong") dismisses the danger of Chinese military power by pointing out that a technologically inferior China cannot project force more than one hundred miles. But China's emerging military designs are on the South China Sea, not Tokyo or Taipei, and certainly not Washington. Thus, conflict may begin with other Asian forces, none of which can stand up to China without direct U.S. help. A.D. McLennan ("Balance, Not Containment") understands that "a continental power's decision to go to sea signals strategic warning", and his analysis of the value to China of the disputed Spratley Islands suggests that China is planning to seize them—and that would likely precipitate regional war.

If hostilities with China's most likely Spratleys adversary—the Philippines—dragged on for more than a few days they might spread to the Philippines proper, which could precipitate direct U.S. involvement. Would other claimants in ASEAN also engage? Would Vietnam attack China? Would Taiwan exploit the instability? And what about Japan

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and Korea, whose critical energy sea lanes pass the Spratleys? The downside of such a conflict is potentially so enormous that our basic national interests are served by helping to defuse this and related issues.

Here are some diplomatic, military, commercial, and political actions that could help do so:

The United States should help the claimants explore the creation of a commercial condominium to facilitate oil exploration, a mechanism used successfully in other areas to allow commercial exploitation *before* issues of sovereignty are resolved. Simultaneously, however, we should operationalize our new agreement with Japan by helping its military extend its range of normal operations south past the Paracel and Spratley Islands. Japan's sea lanes of communications, which run through the South China Sea, are critical to its survival. Its air and naval forces can take increased responsibility for air-sea rescue, piracy in international waters, scientific surveys, and other activities that can justify a regular, peaceful presence in the area.

Additionally, the United States should increase support for the Philippines' military modernization by expediting a new military assistance program to include training, maintenance, and financing for new and surplus U.S. equipment. We should also rethink current policy under our Mutual Defense Treaty with the Philippines, which is to respond only to an attack on its home islands. This could turn out to be shortsighted; this may be a case where, despite the risks, a greater degree of "strategic ambiguity" would enhance regional stability.

On the economic side, the West and ASEAN should force China to choose between the achievement of its current economic plans and the military domination of East Asia—in short, trade and investment in return for good behavior. We have ample leverage; to meet its economic objectives, China will need more than $50 *trillion* in foreign investments in the first half of the next century. We can and should see to it that this money will *not* flow to an expansionist nation that is sowing instability and soiling the Asian nest.

Finally, the political side. America should increase public support for the peaceful self-determination of Chinese nationalities, particularly Tibet. While we cannot and should not wish to incite rebellion, we should encourage *peaceful* dialogue on self-determination for Chinese minorities. Our diplomats should visit minority community representatives in China and receive them in Washington. In the historical context of a China known for its divisive tendencies, this and similar actions would serve both as a signal to China to tend to its own backyard, and as a signal to these minorities that they have our support for peaceful change.

Peter Schaefer
Washington, DC

ROBERT ROSS' criticism of my position on Chinese weapons exports reminds me of an old *American* proverb: He can't see the forest for the trees. To compare China's export of nuclear weapons technology to Mideast pariah states with U.S. nuclear cooperation with allies like Britain and Japan, or with democratic states like Israel, is the height of moral equivalence. Mideast pariah states are rightly viewed with alarm because they have slaughtered their own people and because they commit aggression against their neighbors. They export terror. China's cozy relations with them should give us pause.

When Clinton officials catch the Chinese government in violations, they typically excuse Beijing by saying, as Robert Einhorn did earlier this year, that "at a minimum, China's chemical export controls are not operating effectively enough to ensure compliance with China's prospective obligation not to assist anyone in any way to acquire chemical weapons." In short, we are told, they won't, they can't, comply and we won't make them. The Clinton administration, just prior to Jiang Zemin's visit, accepted paper promises from Beijing to cut off future nuclear cooperation with Iran. Accepting paper promises from the

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folks who invented paper is no solid basis for a policy of "engagement." It is the psychological basis for appeasement.

We all pray for peace. We do not want to make China our enemy. In view of Beijing's recalcitrance, however, I strongly believe that only a policy of resolution and strength can carry us safely and honorably into the next century. Ronald Reagan said: "Trust, but verify." The Clinton administration says: "Trust, close your eyes and cash checks." The Republican Party will not be forgiven by Americans if it abandons Reagan's legacy. We need a foreign policy which defends our ideals and our national security.

Gary L. Bauer
Family Research Council

IN "Why Our Hardliners Are Wrong", Robert Ross demonstrates the perverse effect that arms control treaties can produce in our thinking about national security. Ross invokes the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty and the Chemical Weapons Convention in defending China against congressional and other critics of its weapons proliferation practices regarding Iran, Pakistan, Syria, and Algeria. His argument is that China's "weapons proliferation policy is in substantive compliance with all international arms control agreements."

One could argue over whether Ross' legal conclusion is correct, but what is most noteworthy, I think, is how Ross uses the existence of arms control agreements to direct attention away from the important question—whether China's proliferation practices are harmful to our national interests—and toward the far less significant question of compliance with the agreements. Now, I do not belittle the principle that states should respect their international legal obligations. But I think it is a failure of perspective on Mr. Ross' part—a failure encouraged by the common overestimation in foreign policy circles of the importance of arms control accords—to suggest that the issue of China's export of missile, nuclear weapon, and chemical weapon technology and equipment to rogue regimes should be judged primarily from the standpoint of whether it violates a treaty.

An extreme example might serve to clarify my point: If China donated an air force and submarine fleet to Cuba and U.S. officials and legislators objected, it would hardly answer for Mr. Ross to claim that China is exempt from criticism on the grounds that the transfers violated no treaty.

Douglas Feith
Feith Zell, P.C.

Robert Ross replies:

PETER Schaefer agrees that China's military cannot defeat Taiwan's defense capabilities. Surely he recognizes the greater obstacles China faces in the distant waters of the South China Sea. Rather than investing scarce economic and strategic resources to defend worthless dots of land, Washington can sell F-16s to the Philippines, quickly correcting the military imbalance at less expense to other interests and helping American industry. Douglas Feith is correct that it would be "perverse" to evaluate a country's policy by referring to legal agreements. Perhaps he missed it, but I made just this point in my article. I also noted that U.S. policy disproportionately focuses on China, insofar as greater harm to U.S. policy comes from allies that trade with Iran as they do with any other country. The recent Franco-Russian agreement to build a pipeline for Iran underscores this point.

Gary Bauer's concern for moral equivalency is touching, but if he had read the article he would have known that China's missile and chemical exports to "Mideast pariah states" neither violate international or U.S.-China agreements nor advance Iran's military capabilities. Moreover, despite Chinese agreements to help Iran develop nuclear energy and reprocess plutonium, none violates international treaties and, with the partial exception of a zirconium cladding facility that it is phasing out, Beijing never implemented the agree-

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ments. For Mr. Bauer, these are inconvenient facts, but they are facts nonetheless. Like so many on the far left and far right, Mr. Bauer is more interested in using China to advance his domestic agenda than in understanding the complexities of China or of U.S. foreign policy. This is irresponsible and unethical.

Science Friction:

BRIAN TUCKER ("Science Friction: The Politics of Global Warming", Fall 1997) has done an excellent job of presenting the complexity of the global warming issue, with its scientific, economic, and political aspects. I can reinforce his skepticism about the adequacy of the scientific base for the far-reaching policies being considered at the December 1997 UN-sponsored conference in Kyoto.

The key problem is that the actual observations of global temperature do not, by any stretch of the imagination, match what the computer models are telling us. Instead of the predicted warming trend of between 0.2° and 0.3°C per decade, the data from weather satellites, independently confirmed by balloon-borne instruments, show a slight cooling trend. There are at least half a dozen possible explanations for the discrepancy—ranging from solar variability and changes in cloudiness, to more fundamental problems with the models themselves. It is obviously important to discover which one of these is correct before adopting drastic controls to cut back carbon dioxide emissions from energy use.

Tucker correctly identifies one of the chief problems with the Global Climate Treaty: it does not have a defined goal. No one knows what level of greenhouse gas concentration in the atmosphere is "dangerous." The science is ambiguous or nonexistent. It may well turn out that a higher concentration is preferable to a lower one.

There is less uncertainty about the consequences should there be some moderate greenhouse warming in the next century. Almost everyone agrees that agriculture will benefit, as will many other human activities. The greatest fear has been that the sea level rise, ongoing for some centuries, might accelerate as glaciers melt and ocean water expands. It now appears, however, that increased evaporation from the ocean is a more important factor; it would lead to increased deposition of snow and ice in the polar regions—which would slow down a rise in sea level.

What is certain from this discussion is that the underlying science is neither "settled" nor "compelling", as politicians often claim. To charge ahead blindly and put economies and peoples' welfare at risk is both foolhardy and irresponsible. □

S. Fred Singer
Science and Environmental Policy Project

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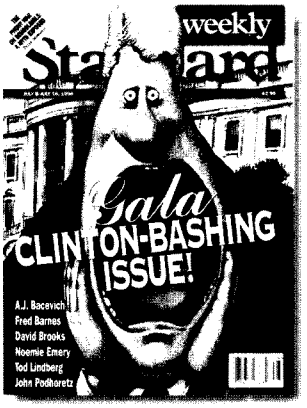

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